



DATE: January 11, 2016

FROM: Midwest Energy Cooperative

TO: Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Broadband Issues in the Rural Space – Member Input

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The following document represents a sliver of comments received by member/customers over the course of our fiber deployment project. Input was received through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, e-mail and as the result of various calls-to-action. As our biggest concern relates to the consideration of satellite as one solution for rural America, those comments are highlighted in yellow. Fiber absolutely needs to be given priority. Invest once please!!! We elected not to edit what was received so as to protect the integrity of member remarks. Additionally, we intentionally omitted last names to protect their identities but have them available if needed. Comments are interspersed to include some newer (as recent as this week) and some older (pre-build).

I live in rural Cass County in Michigan. We do not have reliable Internet. We have never been able to get Internet via providers such as our phone service (we live too far from a relay for DSL) and cable does not serve residents on our road. We have suffered through using unreliable, slow and expensive satellite Internet service for many years and gone through three satellite providers in our attempt at obtaining good Internet service (allowing us remote access to our office and work at home when necessary) with no luck. Because of the low population density in our area providers such as the phone companies and cable companies have no incentive to make their services available, and they don't. Currently Midwest Energy Cooperative is planning to make fiber connections available to us which I hope will offer us fast, reliable and affordable Internet service for the first time. It is very important that FCC policies adjust to provide funds for building out the Internet infrastructure to rural areas and make them available to those that actually produce results. In the past incumbent providers such as phone companies and cable companies have received funds but failed to deliver results to under-served residents in areas like ours. They should not be allowed to encumber funds when they have exhibited failure to deliver service to under-served communities. **Jeff N.**

It can absolutely be better! We only have dial up. Tell me would VERY SLOW internet service affect you in any way? Many items cannot even be downloaded because of dial up service. Believe me all of us, rich or poor who have dial up are tired and fed up with WAITING for FASTER INTERNET SERVICE. My electric COOPERATIVE - MIDWEST ENERGY COOPERATIVE has developed a small scale fiber to the home model, and is prepared to expand that across our service area. It takes money. For years we all with phone service have paid a USF fund . It as we are told, was for all Americans. The Connect America Fund is money to extend broadband in RURAL AREAS-SUCH AS WHERE I LIVE:::::-MARCELLUS,MICHIGAN. My electric company is a cooperative and as such is by and for it's customers. It brought electriciy to our rural area when already populated areas were receiving it. My father recieved electricity in the 1930's and saw the lights come on walking in a field bringing cattle up to the barn. The point is we need it now, you also know it's needed. We need and deserve the 1.8 billion to help rural America receive broadband. JUST DO IT. **Steven H.**

We live 15 minutes from downtown South Bend and yet still have to rely on the modern day version of dial-up, satellite. Slow normal speeds, even slower "punishment" speeds, and unreliable service are the norm, even when paying for the most expensive service plan. It's so bad that 15 minutes after my kids are home from college, they are ready to go back. They'd rather sit in the McDonalds parking for hours with free wi-fi than be home. A simple two-minute youtube video can be a 30 minute ordeal...if it loads at all. Thunderstorm – no service, snow – no service, fog – no service, sunshine – roll the dice. While satellite was a welcome but expensive option 8 years ago (about the same time, I bought my first flip phone), technology has passed us by and left us in the gigadust. Despite the continual taunts from cable and other broadband providers over the years claiming that service was "now available in your area", we have had absolutely zero options to this point. Fiber is the savior and should be available to all! To say we are anxiously waiting our turn is an understatement. It's on the pole, we can see it...PLUG US IN! We have milk and cookies! P.S. It took me an hour to post this. Why? SATELLITE!! **Eric W.**

We have been trying to get fast internet here on M131 for eight years now. We have never had it. Right now we pay almost \$200 per month for a slow, unreliable service that is the best we have found, which comes via microwave tower. We cannot watch movies or do much else because it is so limited. It affects my internet business very negatively and it would be impossible to conduct many types of internet business. Rural USA has very poor internet as compared with the rest of the developed and developing world which is leaving us behind the rest of the world. I believe it is a national disgrace brought on by politics and the misdirection of our tax dollars. **Max C.**

I live on the "wrong side" of a beautiful lake in St. Joseph County. The "right-siders" have access to high-speed internet and natural gas lines. I don't. For several years we were stuck with dial-up service when others had high-speed choices. **We have been able to upgrade to a satellite dish, thanks to our electric cooperative. It's a great improvement, but has its weaknesses.** I have received notices from the big providers that broadband is now available in my area, but when I contact them, I find out that their generic advertisement (and coverage) actually does NOT include me. Electric cooperatives were designed to bring electric service to rural area such as mine. It's time to give them funding to bring us broadband as well. Please open up CAF funds so that electric cooperatives are able to provide broadband service to their rural customers. **Carol H.**

If you can sign up, you should (w/ Midwest)! We've had Midwest's fiber optic internet since last September and we love it. Super fast and absolutely no glitches!! **Karen H.**

We are so pleased (w/ Midwest), as we thought this service would never come down our dirt lane off of a dirt road! **Susan - Edwardsburg**

Not to sound like a commercial for rural broadband or Midwest Energy, but this article is so true! When I was deciding whether or not to move back to little Cassopolis, MI from Sacramento, CA in June, I knew I was simply going to have to have reliable and fast internet service. I work from home and would need to be on the my computer all day, including holding webinars, etc. I moved and only had slow and unreliable DSL service for the first three months. We actually considered having to move just a few miles away from our farm house so we could have cable internet. However, I knew Midwest Energy was about to connect us to their fiber network so I waited. Now we have lightning speed service and I can work, watch TV and everything else you can do in the city, while still looking out my window at the beautiful countryside and wildlife. I think more rural cooperatives and towns in general are going to have to make that investment to stay vibrant, while keeping the residents they have and attracting new ones! **Tom K.**

Because I live in a rural area, I have to use cellular data at my home. it costs me anywhere between 300-500/month due to overages. My friend in town (2 miles away) has unlimited internet for \$80/month. My husband and I have considered moving because this expense has gotten ridiculous. I work from home and need the internet. **Ryan J.**

Here in rural America we need affordable and reliable broadband internet. The need is probably greater here in rural America since our options are limited and expensive. We are fortunate to have a electric utility coop that can bring this service to all in our rural area but we need you to release the funds that we have created for this use to our coop and not the large telecommunications providers who only care about profits. **Richard M.**

We have lived in a rural area for 13+ years. The first year, we could only access Dial Up Internet. We all know that was not ideal. Nd now, so many years later, we still only have a couple (not so good) choices where we live. We can choose Satellite - which we did have for a number of years. But this is an unreliable choice. Affected by weather, and also mandated that each customer can only have a small sliver of available band width each day. When you went over, you were shut down for 24 hours. And trust me, it did not take much to go over your daily allotment of band width. Something as small as a music video would push you over the edge. THEN the company would charge you to turn it back on. The other choice, which is what we have now - is an air card provided by a cellular company. Still affected by the weather. Cell Tower Maintenance. Etc. And the fact that your location dictates the signal strength - It is almost like using dial up again at times. If you can get a signal at all.... We really need an alternative. Many of us rely on this for jobs and school. **Cherri C.**

Where I live I can only get satellite. It is not so good. My kids sometimes have homework they need to do and Internet service works sometimes and sometimes not. **Jamie C.**

We have been enjoying our new Fiber To The Home service (w/ Midwest) for a little over a week now and we love it! Thank you for providing this service! **Cody L.**

Just got hooked up with broad band service (Midwest). Thank you Midwest Energy!!! It is amazingly fast. Thank you for bringing internet to the rural communities. Wish more companies would follow your lead. **Michelle J.**

I can't even get a high speed internet at my address without paying over \$1000.00. I haven't checked lately but before I cancelled my phone my dial up connection took 20 minutes. The cable and internet services available are to costly and very slow! **Lorraine S.**

I can't get affordable internet. I pay \$100 a month for slow internet because of where I live. I have a child in school who needs this to excellence and I have a business to run. It is not fair!!!! **Michelle M.**

I wish I had broadband. I have satellite and it's not very good at all. **Tony G.**

Where I live I had two choices for high speed internet services. One was Hughesnet, prohibitively expensive, and the other Dish satellite, also expensive but not as bad as Hughesnet. I could not (and still can't) bundle my phone TV and internet to lower my total services bills. I am close to not being able to live where I'd like with the basic services I'd like because I'm on a fixed income and expenses go up and never down. **Loraine B.**

Midwest Energy got a stark affirmation of the benefits of broadband earlier this year when a neighboring municipality needed quality high-speed Internet for its industrial park. With a tenant walkout looming, the City of Niles, Mich., approached Midwest Energy to provide broadband to these high-end users.

"We had businesses potentially threatening to leave the industrial park if we couldn't get them a faster Internet," says Jeff Dunlap, utilities manager for the City of Niles. "We didn't have much time."

Midwest Energy, which has been deploying fiber in its service territory since 2014, met the municipality's deadline, and no one left the park.

"Midwest re-distributed their construction crews, and they made the target. We were very impressed with their attention to our needs, and the businesses are ecstatic," Dunlap says. (**"Broadband Service: The New Greatest Thing – Fiber Projects Help Co-ops Renew Their Mission and Revitalize Their Communities"** – by Cathy Cash – November 2, 2015 – [www.remagazine.coop/broadband-the-new-greatest-thing/](http://www.remagazine.coop/broadband-the-new-greatest-thing/))

It is so unfair that in rural areas we cannot get broadband. My job requires me to use Internet and I use it for research for the books I write. Finding WIFI is an inconvenience. **Peggy E.**

To whomever can help with this problem. I live two miles from the city limits of Three Rivers Mi. and have little choice in internet providers. **I've tried satellite, but lose connection in heavy clouds and must go outside in winter to keep snow off dish.** I also have no signal strength from Verizon, AT&T, and no cable providers available either. My only choices are slow dial up or Sprint Mi-Fi. I chose Sprint because it was faster than dial up, it slows down when a lot of people are using it at the same time and last fall it was down for 40 days while they were working on their towers which did not improve service or speed. **Clarence B.**

We had broadband over power lines for a short time, but that is no longer available. We rely on cell phone service for Internet which is frustrating because the signal where we live is very poor. We need affordable Internet access, especially now with school age children in the home. Recently, I was completing my college degree and had to spend several days at the college computer lab to finish work for "online" classes because I didn't have reliable Internet at home. Very frustrating to take available courses online to reduce time away from home only to end up at the college because of unreliable Internet service... **Guy N.**

We live on a major highway in Cass County & cannot get any internet service through the old phone lines. Makes it impossible for my kids to do their homework w/ out it! **Tara B.**

We are in desperate need of unlimited and affordable broadband. Current options are very limited and very limiting. **Satellite or cellular are the options that are available and they both have monthly data limits that are not enough for our family. The speed of the service is also not acceptable.** **Andy S.**

Very satisfied with the new Broadband Internet that you (Midwest) offer. I have been waiting years for something like this. Thank you Midwest! **Tara – Dowagiac**

Using Midwest for our internet needs has allowed us to catch up with Internet speeds that are normally only available in larger cities. Having this option in a rural market is very exciting and opens up many opportunities for our family. **Chad – Cassopolis**

We are so grateful that Midwest decided to forward action on this project! SW Michigan has been sorely overlooked for so many years; and I truly believe access to high-speed internet will have a positive economic impact! It makes it easier for us to do business...and I have no doubt, it will help others as well! Thank You!

**Bernie – Cassopolis**

I live in rural Marcellus. The only option for us is satellite internet. If it is windy, raining or snowing we have no internet. I have 2 high school students who have a difficult time with homework. Marcellus people please sign up (w/ Midwest)!!!! **Jennifer H.** (Note: Midwest uses a crowd sourcing feature to determine where we build next)

Please extend your (Midwest) services into town in Schoolcraft. I don't want Comcast or Frontier or AT&T if I can help it. I want fiber optic internet... **Arthur C.**

Yes! The internet service that is provided in my area is horrible. It gets slower and slower as Frontier takes on more customers. The prices are too high for the 1MB of speed if your lucky. Satellite internet is even worse of an option for this area. There needs to be better broadband here soon or I'm not sure how this area will ever grow. Thank you. **Jennifer A.**

As I sit here on my computer trying to provide for my family by listing car parts on ebay through my dial up connection ,I receive an email from my electric cooperative telling me that broadband internet is a possibility. I spend 15 minutes sometimes waiting for a single picture to load. I would love to have some time to spend with my 2 year old son but when i'm not working my full time job I am sitting here trying to make whatever side income I can to make ends meet. We have tried every single company that claims to provide internet to our area and every single one has let us down, talking to our neighbors, we are not the only ones. I will take to the streets on this one. We have literally considered moving back to Chicago just to have Broadband internet again. That's just plain sad. **Alexander K.**

I had one choice for internet service: Comcast. One choice is no choice. I will pay what they are charging or have nothing. Comcast was the last company I was interested supporting because of their less than adequate customer service. But I am with them because I have to be. I would be thrilled to see more choices for service in rural Cass County. **Angie E.**

We are not able to get broadband. Even though we are a cross street of a major road. We are forced to use high cost satellite Internet that is very bad. Bad service, bad connection, and very restricted. All while paying an arm and a leg. It is not right. Something needs to be done about it. **Lisa B.**

The services that you (Midwest) are bringing to such remote areas has been direly needed for far too long! In such a technology driven age there is no way people should be forced to treat internet access as a luxury just because of where they live. Can't wait to hear more news on how the zones are developing! **Zachary S.**

Back in the fall of 2010, when Frontier took over our telephone service from Verizon; we were told that internet service through them would be "sooner then later". Then about a year and a half ago we were told by our telephone service that there was too few customers to have internet available to us. We have since had a radio and antenna from an internet provider placed at my home. This service is definitely faster then dial up. We would welcome the opportunity of having broadband available and would use it if it was reasonably priced. **Melvin & Deborah G.**

My broadband story is that I don't have it. I live in a rural section of Cass county MI which has very little choice in broadband providers. I can either use satellite internet, or dial-up. Other than that I barely get cell signal in order to use my phone as a hot spot, and that is barely on a 3G connection. These options do not provide the services required for many needs of a broadband connection, and are far too expensive for those services that are provided. I was very excited when I found out about the BPL project that Midwest Energy was working on, and then dismayed when I found out they were canceling it. I work in the technology field and I really need a better solution, otherwise I will have to move. (Which is not a good option) I have looked online at the FCC website for service in my area. Comcast and Verizon both report that they provide broadband in my area, but when I called to order service I was told I was not in their coverage area. They are falsely reporting to the government the range of their coverage area. **Matthew B.**

Thank you (Midwest) for giving us our first internet other than satellite or cell service. We moved into the South West Edwardsburg area in 2007 not dreaming we would have 0 options. Comcast is out by the main road but their feeder box is too far away and they could have cared less to even return our/neighbors calls to even discuss options. We have Midwest Electric and Propane and so happy we will be spending our internet access with you as well. Thank you. **Ron K.**

I am so sick of Comcast I want choices! Thank you Midwest! Comcast does not appreciate their customers. Keep their service over a particular time period and they raise their prices on you. If you want to drop services they gauge you in a different way. Makes me sick. I hope that Midwest's service is reliable and quick. I just want internet. I recently dropped my TV and phone with Comcast. Come on, North Dowagiac!!! **Fred S.**

I live between where AT&T and Verizon are willing to extend DSL broadband lines. Also Comcast is unwilling to come to where I live. I am talking about 3 miles or less in all three cases. I am under AT&T and Verizon has Fiber optic cable less than a mile down the road, but I cannot use it. I have to use a Hughes Dish for internet. Which is expensive and does not provide enough speed to use the streaming video that the world is rapidly going to. I have asked periodically for 10 years when each of them will extend lines and it is clear they are not motivated to do it. Wireless would also need infrastructure to make it available. **James G.**

I live in an area that cannot get any normal, functional high speed internet. It is VERY frustrating to try to run a small business without optimal internet connection. The ONLY options available here are satellite or internet through my cell phone. Very limiting and very fragile. I cannot begin to tell you the importance it would be to have good, functional internet. **Margaret M.**

I am not in favor of release of money to incumbent providers. Money should be available to the open like Midwest Energy. I demand our legislators make open market providers be aloud to bring Broadband to rural customers like myself. Regards, **John S.**

We are considering moving out of the house and the area we love because we do not have access to sufficient internet for me to do my job. It is very frustrating because we are at the mercy of the providers, and they won't invest in running cables on our street. We have satellite, which is good, but the data is extremely limited and we run out of allowed bandwidth very quickly. I can only download a few documents a month before we run out and the company cuts us off. We need better internet! **Susan H.**

My wife and I recently purchased a new home. Being a younger couple we have become accustomed to doing most things online i.e. streaming TV, movies, gaming social media. We prefer these things to standard television and entertainment. We are also starting a small rental property business and are developing a web site to go with. My wife is an avid blogger and does book reviews for various publishers in her spare time as well as finally getting around to finishing her degree online. We were shocked when we were told that our cable company which has extensive service lines no more than 1/2 mile from our new home would not be able to move our service and had no plans to expand to our area. After contacting ISP after ISP it was the same problem. Too expensive, not enough people etc. We were even told the only way we would ever get high speed internet was to build a subdivision. I have 10 neighbors in our immediate vicinity screaming for internet and nobody is listening. We are now having to learn to work off a wireless 3mbps connection that drops when the wind blows. Most things we used to do nonchalantly are now impossible. Anything faster would require going through our wireless provider's expensive and limited data service. With so many ISP's running high speed within 1/2 mile of our home its frustrating to be told (by a recent technician for a service we cancelled after one month) that we might see something in 20 years! We are frustrated and while we love the quieter neighborhood we are at a loss by having to basically stop doing the things we loved doing online for the past 10 years. If we were going to do it again we wouldn't have bought the house. It seems strange but technology has become that ingrained in everyone's lives that in this day and age it seems ludicrous to still be staring at the unending revolving loading wheel we all have come to hate. Meanwhile people with in a fraction of a mile are enjoying the high speed life and everyone on our road are left out. We need this policy change for us and everyone like us. **Nathan P.**

I've been on a main highway "M 60" for years. Every year it seems that we hear about a cable or DSL line that will be installed. Then every year the system disappears. Please help Midwest Energy install the fiber lines to the rural areas surrounding Cassopolis, MI. It has been a very long wait and options are very few. **The satellite service is not a whole lot better than dial-up and is way over priced.** **David C.**

**Living where I live, Direct TV or Dish Network are not options - too many trees, can't get a signal from the satellites.** Same goes for internet service providers. The only option is Comcast Cable triple play. At \$180.00/month, to me this is getting too expensive. We need another option for broadband service besides the cable company. **James S.**

Great news today we were moved into a one of the new zones (w/ Midwest) and will get real high speed internet this year thank you Midwest energy for looking out for us country folks. **Tony F.**

Woke up to flags all over our neighborhood (Midwest) last week....beyond thrilled at the thought of real unlimited high speed internet that doesn't break the budget! Never thought we would live to see the day!!! **Dennis C.**

We live in an area that has broadband within 5 miles of our house. There are two different companies that refuse to do anything to help us. **I currently use satellite that is not cost effective and works a little better than dial up. I think that this is unacceptable.** **Bob F.**

I do know that broadband can make the internet experience much better. At present I can only get one megabit service from my current provider. I was promised a faster connection and received nothing. All of the cable/internet providers stop at the city limits which is two miles from where I live. My utility company offered much faster internet service than what I currently have. At present I am still waiting. I understand that it all comes down to finding the money to complete the process. Why can't we have a faster internet without living in a city. **Jim B.**

At this point in order to get Internet service we have to use our cell phone as a hot spot. Our only option is Hughes Net who is very expensive because they are the only game in town and that is not fair. Every house should be able to have several options for Internet service so as not to be taken advantage of plus many people in the rural areas can't afford the high prices by Hughes Net. I am almost sorry I moved to Michigan because of the Internet issues.

**Tina E.**

When we first moved to our current address we had NO options other than DirectWay. The trouble with DirectWay was two-fold. First, it is susceptible to weather interruptions. Second, it was dependant upon some finicky hardware that periodically had to be physically replaced (every year or so). Dial up would not even work in our area. Now we do have Cable Internet. It is fairly reliable, but fairly expensive. We have limited options and would love if our MidWest Energy Coop were able to be a provider! We are accustomed to their excellent service in electric and propane, and with FAIR pricing. **Margaret H.**

We have lived in our home for just over 20 years and have not been able to find a source of Internet that provides service to our rural address. **Richard A.**

Our current residence is within 1/8 miles of homes that have high speed internet service. However, no provider is willing to extend service to our area. **Steve K.**

Rural broadband can be much better. I have in the past had cable broadband, downloads were fast we had netfliks, and there was no limit on how much useage we had. I move to rural Michigan my only choice was satellite Internet which cost me about twice as much I only had 10 gigs of downloads a month which on the first month we used up the first weekend. After that we used the Internet for only what we had too and got rid of net flics. We have since canceled our Internet am waiting for a better choice in this area. **Seth R.**

We currently only have the option having dial up or satellite for internet service. Satellite is not consistent enough and very expensive. Dial up gives us the minimum needed to get on the internet, but at times takes forever to get anything uploaded or searched. We enjoy living in the country but still would like to have the ability or option to have good internet service. **Saisha C.**

Broadband does not reach this far out and I do not have it at home. As a church pastor we would like to have it at the church also. If my local electric coop (Midwest) could get some of the funding from the FCC it would open up much of this rural area. Please take a minute and ask the FCC to fund other than the present companies as the present companies will not come out here. Thank you. **Pastor Sam P.**

We only have the option of Frontier and satellite and neither one is reliable or fast. Would love to have a fast broadband. **Terri B.**

We are still waiting for fiber optic cable to be laid. Our telephone lines are party lines. Caller I.d not available,voicemail unavailable. High speed internet unheard of on constantine rd.constantine michigan. Our power lines run behind our house and would be insanely easy to string cable wire. They just don't. My android phone can only do a few things as far as internet. We can't enroll for obamacare because of the lack of availability of broadband. Please help us step out of 1975.: **Shannon R.**

Not everyone has a success story when it comes to rural broadband. For far too many years I paid a monthly fee for a dialup service (the only option available to me at the time), until frustration at an accumulated 400+ emails overcame me. Taking 10 minutes to pull up one email was too time consuming to use the service. Because all institutions and employers expect that you will have computer service to work with, I then converted to a satellite dish service with a hefty \$80/month fee. I was encouraged that our electric service would soon be able to provide us with an internet connection at a reasonable cost. However, after a few more years, the expansion of that service was dropped before it could be implemented in my area. In the meantime, several times a year, I would contact all of the phone carriers (Verizon, Sprint, AT&T) to see if they would offer it to me. "Not yet available in your area" was the common response. Finally, about 2-3 years ago, Frontier took over from Verizon and installed lines capable of hooking to a modem. Is it high speed? No, that is not available. Can I stream a movie? No, I can't even stream a short u-tube video. Is Comcast cable or another option available? No, not for this dead-end road with only 28 households. Will a smartphone handle it? No, I live in a valley and the cell phone tower transmission doesn't reach my home. Yes, I am demanding and expecting the FCC to "hear our cry". If you expect everyone to enter the digital age, then you must provide access to it. **Jill B.**

As a rural consumer of internet service, I have been limited in options available in my location. **I have been using satellite service for the past three years.** I feel Midwest Energy Service can provide broadband service to ensure modern, up to date solutions long overdue and that the FCC should provide funding for those entities with the understanding of the unique needs related to the rural consumer. Midwest Energy has risen to the cause of those who have long been denied optimal broadband service. Only by allowing those providers knowledgeable with rural America will we, as rural consumers, be in the same playing field as urban users. **Evaleen S.**

Bottom line..... Walk in my shoes. I live on a fixed income alone in rural southern Michigan (Union, Michigan 49130). My home is located 1/10th mile north of the State of Indiana border. Daily I drive to Bristol Public Library in Bristol, Indiana in order to obtain internet connection. In 2008 I lost my full-time job. With gas prices increasing, wear and tear on vehicle and the mere time involved in conducting business is enough to prompt support of rural Americans' need to have access to quality and affordable broadband system. We/I personally need a meaningful solution to this difficulty! Imagine what your life would be like if it were limited in this way. Then ask the question why are there so many stumbling blocks put in the way of progress?. An effective rural broadband system would benefit a large group of Americans verses a small self-serving group. I have been in my home since 1998 and have lived long enough without a connection to the world. Isn't it about time we all move forward? At this rate, I may loose my ability to drive or die before it happens! **Mary Ann B.**

I am tired of being forced to pay Comcast extremely high prices and want Midwest Energy Coop to be able to provide competition! **Jim W.**

I live in a rural area where it is extremely difficult to get any type of internet. **Unless you have to pay high prices for satellite internet then you have data usage which if you home school like we do then you run out of data and have to purchase tokens at high prices also. We've run out of data all the time and can not afford the tokens so we must wait until our due date is here and we get the data we need.** I am so grateful to Midwest Energy for bringing broadband to the rural areas now we can home school and surf the web for the information we need to help our kids succeed in school and life. **Cheryl S.**

I see these guys (Midwest) on my road the last few weeks. I am SOOO excited. So ready for new internet that I can actually have two people use at the same time at my house. I almost stopped to make them take a picture but thought they'd think I was weird. LOL, MOST DEFINITELY will keep informed. Thanks again for bringing out to the cornfield areas ☺. **Nita R-M.**

We're connected (with Midwest)!!!!!! WOW it's so stable and fast. On cable the rate varies with the number of people on. With the fiber it's just as solid as a brick...I have two things to complain about,,,It's only running at 24.9. Okay, just kidding....and WHERE IS MY YARD SIGN!!! I am a proud fiber user!!!!!! Seriously though I am very pleased its been a wonderful experience and your marketing is great. **Larry L.**

ABSOLUTELY, I live in rural Paw Paw, MI my street only has 2 other houses on it. NO ONE will ever run anything down my street for just a possible 3 more customers when they can go into a new plat of houses where they can get a lot more customers. A few years back I was able to sign up for the program that was supposed to help with internet to rural area's my only choice is satellite internet. Only the basic of basic is available and the program pays half your bill which is 39.95 (that's half) which really burns me when I see ads on tv that start at 19.95 my service is slightly better than dial-up and comes with only so much down load not unlimited like broadband. Oh, by the way with 3 teenager and having to share the internet is a joy. **Teresa H.**

We desperately need broadband in the rural areas. Today many work from home and with our current slow speeds, it's next to impossible to meet today's standards. Many farmers in our area depend on the Internet to sell their produce. Again, it's very difficult. My neighbor recently spent nine hours in the Burger King parking lot in town trying to register her family for Obama care. Her slow speed at home wasn't able to cope with her trying to register. It's a necessity these days to have a dependable high speed internet service. **Candace Y.**

Where we live only DSL through Frontier is available. Speeds are very slow for the cost. Would love to have other options available. **Mitch B.**

The existing providers for broadband service are unwilling or perhaps negligent in their duty to serve families and individuals in rural space. Right now our options are: cell phone "hot spot" or satellite uplink, both costly and unreliable. **Kenneth B.**

First I had Net-zero dial up that sucked, then Wild-blue satellite and that was very slow and unreliable not to mention 50.00 + a month, Then Alltel had a thumb drive unlimited internet service until Verizon bought them out. Then we got a Hot spot device from Verizon it was 3G slow and 50.00 a month with limited 5 Gig a month, Then they upgraded the near-by tower to 4G speed, Now I burn through that 5G limit per month as fast as a snow flake on a hot plate it cost me \$10.00 for every gig I go over. Now I am trying Frontier Internet service through my phone line to my house. The old wires going to my house down my road are not DSL friendly and having connection problems weekly so far. I really need fast and reliable internet to do my work from home and banking etc. **Richard M.**

Living in the country has always been my dream until 2 yrs ago. I moved 4 miles out of town and can't get decent internet. The only thing available is satellite which is a nightmare and too expensive for what the service you get. We are at their mercy and I am so tired of it that I am ready to sell and move back to civilization. **Sharon C.**

I know we are very excited for this (Midwest fiber) to happen!! Patient....Not really, but willing to wait!! **Kati M.**

Still waiting in northeastern Dowagiac. Cant' wait to get rid of satellite and the data restrictions. There's been a lot of complaints about them lately. **Ronda Y.**

We live so far out of town to have common access such as Comcast or even thru Frontier. Broadband through our Electric Company Midwest Energy is needed in our area! **Jodee S.**

Broadband connects anyone to the rest of the world. People in rural areas need to experience it to be able to keep up with the changing world, new technologies, and to help them be a more rounded individual. **Gaby H.**

YES! My God it is so frustrating with dial-up internet. Now we have DSL from Frontier but it is still so much slower than what most of America has. With much of today's communication and entertainment coming over broadband internet people in rural America do not have the opportunity to take advantage of these services. **Alan F.**

I worked for Comcast Spotlight for 7 years. The Toledo DMA was the last DMA in southern Michigan to receive the broadband roll-out. I carried on for several years after broadband made its way through southeastern Michigan trying to work at a speed and reliability level not equivalent to many of my co-workers. I could not email my clients their commercials to review. Instead, I either had to travel to Adrian or Jackson to attend to these details or get into the car and drive to the client. Broadband was given to the largest, most affluent, most densely-populated areas first. The Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing DMAs were provided high-speed internet first. Once our area was being built out, it was still another year before I received cable and only at the intervention of my district manager. I was told that because I lived 1/10 of a mile off of Round Lake Hwy. where the cable ran down that street, they were not going to serve me...my own company. I can assure you that it would have looked very bad to have a dish sitting on my roof. Even at the end of my employment with Comcast Spotlight, many of my friends surrounding Devils Lake in Lenawee County were still unable to be served. I got many requests and complaints. The minimum number of homes that justified cable to be run to the home was 20 homes taking cable within a mile and that was put on the shoulders of the consumer. If an individual wanted to do the legwork to round up 20 broadband/cable tv takers within a mile, they might be included in the build out plan. Rural populations often don't meet this model. As far as viewership and coverage area was concerned, the mapping software pulled an entire township into the map even if we only had a few households served in that township. The real story is the penetration rate for service. I'm guessing that this still holds true today and that areas served are grossly over-reported. I continue to see offers for this and that service "available now in your area". However, if you call, they apologize and tell you that your home is not included in that offer. The inequity seen in rural populations not receiving broadband is even more compounded when situations such as our past winter where excess snow caused school closings and work closures. Even if your workplace was open for business, if you couldn't get down your road, you couldn't get to work. If your children's school was closed, you might have to stay home from work as well. You couldn't even drive your children to a local library where so many adults and children have access to high speed internet in order to do things like school work, work from home, apply for benefits, or job search. I'm fortunate, if there is a day where the weather prevents my ability to drive to the office, I can effectively work from home. Many do not have that option. Finally, I heard on a Toledo television station recently that some school districts are trying to put a plan in place for online learning when students are not able to attend school and even for school breaks. This further puts at a disadvantage the ability of low-income and rural households to have the same opportunity to maintain parity with others in their workplace or school building. We need to finish the job of providing broadband to rural areas even when it doesn't fit a profit model. The expense to not providing national coverage to all populations is far more costly. Let rural electric cooperatives that are poised to deliver a high-speed broadband solution do what they do so well; provide service to rural America. Thank you. **Patricia C.**

We went without ANY broadband for years because the only provider in my area, Verizon (now Frontier) didn't realize they could deliver it to my home. What we do have is very slow and unreliable. I'm told it's because we are at the end of a distribution line. This was supposed to be improved last June. PLEASE let Midwest Energy have some funds to do the job that Frontier (and Comcast and ATT, etc., etc., etc.) won't. **Rick D.**

While living in SE Kalamazoo county near Fulton for the last 18 years, we've gone from slow dial up internet access to satellite access through Wildblue/Dishnet as our only option. During the last 10 years it's been the Wildblue access, which has been expensive, extremely poor connection speed and never knowing if it will work from day to day. Since the beginning of this year we've switched our phone service to all wireless, increased our data plans and costs in order to have somewhat of a more reliable access. We realize it was our choice to live in the country, however it would seem that we should be able to have access to more affordable options for internet access this day and age. My wife and I both work at public universities so it's difficult to go home and have to work from home when you can't get access to the internet. Thank you for your time. **Paul C.**

As someone who lives in an area with this type of service you may ask why I would be writing to speak on behalf of rural America? Well, I was one of the thousands of unserved/underserved MI residents for many years. When a fire destroyed our home we had to make the decision to rebuild or move. Having no access to high speed internet was one of the determining factors of our choice to move to an area that we felt would serve us and our young children better. My children are now 10 and 12 years old and although we gave up many of the advantages of staying in a rural community, I can't imagine not having the access to the 'world' that we do now. This year's winter is a perfect example of how important broadband access is to me and my family. With the number of 'snow days' the schools experienced this winter, we have been asked to make up some of those days with e-learning (on-line classes and education time). This option was not a hardship for our family because we have the ability to connect and fulfill these requirements. I wonder if MI would have opened up the same options to their schools if the residence had the same availability to the internet that we do- just a few miles across the state line. The nature of my job also requires me to be connected 24/7. This is simply not something I could do easily if we had chosen to continue to live in Cassopolis MI. I speak on behalf of the constituents that have fallen through the cracks and out of your community. **Candy R.**

Stuck with dial up for years. Forget about doing anything faster than a snail's pace with that. Verizon came out with a 5-spot that worked like a cell phone, but the speeds were still never very fast (usually about 100kbps to 500kbps). Also, Verizon (or ATT, Sprint) are all very expensive (\$50/month or more) and data usage is very limited. People in the city are streaming Netflix for \$19.95 a month with no care about how much data they use while I'm worried about going over my data usage limit just watching a couple of videos online. Now I have Dish Broadband. The speeds are finally good (7Gbps to 16Gbps) but I'm still somewhat limited on monthly data usage compared to cable or DSL users. Also, there's about a 4 second lag that makes doing anything in real time impossible. Not a big deal most of the time, but households with kids will hate it because they can't game online in real time. Even though Dish is better than anything I've been able to get so far, it's still way too expensive. **Keith C.**

I do not have any access to affordable Internet we have Excede and for \$50/month are limited to 10gb a month and have to be very careful not to go over. People in town and cities do not understand this limitation and as a parent with an elementary student and middle school student it would be great to be able to use interactive web sites be able to use learning sites. **Cynthia H.**

Why is it that my phone company is always telling me that high speed internet will be out in my area so, but that's been 10 years. Hope to get it soon with the help of Midwest energy can help. **David Y.**

I pay just over 65 a month for 10 gig of undependable internet by satellite. It would be really nice to have good internet to use to help with my kids education and keep in touch with family. **i definitely don't recommend satellite but it is all i can get here.** **Roger C.**

We are excited (about Midwest fiber) over in the Niles Michigan area too! **Stephanie D.**

I just had a gentleman come in to pay his bill and said that when he lived over by Detroit his internet service was provided by (AT&T) U-verse and that it was supposed to be top-notch. He went on to say that ours is even better than that! Comments like that just make my day!! ☺ **Karen S.** (Note: Karen is a Midwest Energy associate)

Thank you (Midwest) for our fiber hookup! It is absolutely incredible!!! I can watch video without waiting, pause, waiting, pause, and I will be able to FaceTime or Skype without using all my data limit! It is outstanding! I highly recommend the phone and Internet service to all rural residents! **Margaret P-C.**

The only service I can get is dial up internet through AT&T. They say high speed is available out where I live, but they do not provide it because they cannot guarantee the speed which means they do not offer it. **I can get Dish Network Internet, but that is 60 to 70 a month which is highway robbery.** So I wishing that Midwest could provide service to all rural areas because it would be cheap and better. I love my electric company for the services and help they provided to me when I had no income to pay the electric and allowed me to make very small payments until it was caught up. Without carrying companies like Midwest for their customers, the larger companies are gonna keep prices high. Lets make internet affordable for all people and stop the high prices. **Michelle B.**

We purchased our dream home on 2007, a beautiful country estate surrounded by nature and farm fields yet only 4 miles from town for convenience. We thought we had the best of everything, only to realize within weeks of moving in that we had no options for access to high speed internet! Our society has changed so much in recent years and continues to increase it's reliance on internet based commerce and communication daily it seems. To live without a good connection to the world wide web is to be left in the dark! After living with dial-up for months, and constantly researching other options, we finally had a chance to sign up for a pilot broadband program through our electric provider called BPL. It seemed like a great idea, it worked fairly well for a while, but eventually went the way of the dinosaurs. Luckily for us another option appeared, a small radio communications company put up a 2-way radio tower near us and started streaming a broadband signal over the radio waves. The system is fairly simple but there are some issues with equipment costs initially and reliability ongoing. The speeds are only just sufficient, especially when the monthly cost is compared to other options available elsewhere, such as fiber line connections. I would love to have the option of a fiber line connection. The speeds and reliability are unmatched, and the costs per user seem much more reasonable. All Americans should have the option to choose a good, reliable and affordable high speed internet connection. Thank you. **Richard H.**

I have a home in rural southwestern Michigan which has Internet access only through slow DSL. Comcast and other providers do not service my area which puts me at a great disadvantage. I would welcome faster broadband options. **Robert E.**

The current rural broadband options are absolutely inadequate. I live in an area where our only option is satellite for television as well as satellite for internet. The internet options we have are extremely limited to us by the lack of satellite providers in our area. Our satellite internet is almost pointless to pay for each month. We get internet speeds that don't even equip us to enjoy live feeds, videos, or gaming for our children. The internet is not the only utility hurdle we have, we also don't have phone lines that are up to date to support call waiting, call forwarding, and certainly not dsl. The cable television services are also something that is not an option, nothing wired down our street to be able to utilize that. What really makes it a slap in the face is that a mile down the road there are houses that have every television and internet option. I don't live in an area that is under-populated our "out in the sticks." I live on a road which has many homes and we are 3 miles from town and maybe 4 miles from an interstate. I think that it would be an excellent opportunity to have my elected officials, whom I have voted for and supported, which are on this list of people that we are trying to get attention from, to pick up on this lack of growth in terms of technology and make some improvements. It's all about growth and to be capable of living in this day and age. We shouldn't have to move to a different location to be able to have access to utilities that are adequate. **Kelley W.**

We do not have reasonable and cheap access to internet in our location. If we could get it through our power company it would be a great asset. Currently we use only our phones for the internet. **Austin M.**

We currently have frontier, I feel it is expensive, slow, and undependable as many times I cannot get online. I have heard good things about Midwest broadband and would be interested in switching if the service is better and rates are cheaper. **Judy S.**

I have lived in this rural location for 13 years and still struggle to have adequate internet service. There are only two choices available now, ground based wireless and satellite. Neither of these choices provide consistent service. Both are affected based on weather conditions and number of users on a given tower or satellite. We are also forced to pay a much higher rate than people who live in the city, since there are so few choices. Please help us get these funds allotted so we can have adequate service at a reasonable cost. **James H.**

There are few options in rural areas and where we get covered by cable carries the costs are high because of lack of competition. Also with so few options services suffer greatly. I do have cable at my house and it goes off line daily making it impossible for me to work from home. All I get from Big cable is we are looking at it. **Ronald K.**

We currently pay an exorbitant amount to have exede satellite. I'd like something more affordable. With what we pay we only get 10GB and that is not a lot! We have no choice as our children are expected to do online homework, etc. So we have to pay! I'd like other options like I get when buying a car. **Patty V.**

My sister lives on a major Michigan State Highway less than a mile from another major Michigan State Highway and was still stuck with dial-up until very recently because of the cost of laying the line from the main highway to a crossroad less than a mile away. Her neighbors ACROSS that crossroad had cable and everyone on that side of the road had high-speed connectivity. It's just insane in this day and age that dial-up would even be in use some 15 years after the miracle of it first became widely used by the public. FIFTEEN YEARS!!! The absolute LEAPS in technology make it impossible to believe that anyone should HAVE to use such primitive technology...PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THIS ISSUE!! **Judith T.**

Absolutely rural broadband needs to be better!!! I'm an IT Manager and I've lived in the country my entire life. I love living in the country and would never move back into town. **However, over the years I've tried the only two options available to me: Satellite and Cellular. Satellite simply doesn't work for anyone who needs to VPN into work. The latency is simply too high and you cannot maintain a good connection.** Cellular is "ok", but even where we live, we are considered in "extended 4G", so the phone flip-flops back and fourth from 3G to 4G. During periods of high usage (typically after 2pm), the response time is degraded and I'm trying to work from home, I might as well quit once the network gets bogged down. Rural America is getting short-changed! We are getting left behind! We are not able to take advantage of any WiFi enabled devices since we do not have internet available 24x7. Everything from our thermostats, TVs, entertainment systems, computers, etc. aren't utilized to their fullest potential due to the lack of internet. As consumers, we pay more for these WiFi enabled devices, but can't take advantage of the features. It's getting to the point where non-WiFi enabled devices aren't an option.

**Sandra G.**

I live in a black hole when it comes to the availability of high speed internet. Houses literally 200 yards away have access but the providers refuse to extend the service. DSL is not available. Cable is not available. **My only options are dial up and satellite which is not affordable.** The only internet access I currently have is through my cell phone provider. I would love to be able to receive affordable high speed access without having to travel to a wifi hotspot or actually moving to an area that offers it. **David B.**

I am a doctor and I can not get adequate broadband at my home under the current situation we have now. I am not really what I would think of as truly rural as our area has quite a residential populace, but still no reliable broadband service. I have to go down to my office 10 miles away to do anything serious over broadband. It is time to get this problem solved. We have been paying taxes for this on our phone service long enough. It is time to let our local power provider get involved and bring us the service that we need. **Dr. Bryon B.**

**We have one option, satellite. There is no reason why they should be economical because they don't have any competition. Not only are they expensive, it isn't that great a service.** It would be nice to have the same options as people that are close to town. **Cynthia W.**

I currently live in the village of Colon in SW Michigan. Our electric service is through Consumers Energy. Is there a slight chance that my village will ever see your (Midwest) FTTH service, even if its not within the next 5 years or so? If enough people in Colon were interested in it would we possibly be added to one of your zones? The village township has a franchise agreement with Charter Communications and we also have service through Frontier Communications, but Frontiers service is dismal at best. With the recent consolidations and merger deals between the various cable companies, its believed that prices will continue to go up and customer service will get worse. Thats funny because while prices for consumers go up the actual cost of delivering bandwidth is continuing to go down. **Jordan D.**

Our household just got upgraded to the new fiber optic internet from Midwest this week, and it is awesome! I was able to update all the programs that I have been putting off updating in a matter of minutes, whereas it would have taken me weeks. Thanks Midwest! **Melissa S.**

**We live in an area where the only internet option is satellite, which is costly and limited.** Rural broadband would be exponentially better than current option. **Angel T.**

The rural area in which my husband and I reside does not have rural broadband access. I need to have Internet service for my job, and for almost five years, we have been paying \$50-\$60 per month for Internet service via satellite. It seems our rural area has been forgotten when it comes to providing much-needed cell phone towers and Internet service. Living in Hamilton Township, Van Buren County, feels much like living in the Bermuda Triangle. Please include this area in your consideration of communications coverage rather than sending us back to the methods used by our pioneer forefathers. **Nancy G.**

We live in a rural area outside of Mattawan. We have lived here for 38 years and fought to get even meager internet **connection** to our home a few years ago. It took many many frustrating calls before Frontier was willing to put a connection in. What we have is slow and not always working, and costs way too much. Internet is not a luxury but is a necessity and we feel that without it the value of our house is lessened. Fiber optics would be wonderful and we do not want to wait 20 or more years for that! **Cheri W.**

I always had dial up internet till about 3 yrs ago. I was thrilled when I signed up with Verizon (my local carrier at the time) because I got hi speed internet. It was changed to Frontier and my 2 yr contract ended on my pricing! My monthly cost jumped to almost \$85/month and I only have a little over 1mgs!! It was thrilling when Midwest Energy (our local electric provider) was looking into giving us hi speed internet!! But that was even several years before I signed up with Verizon and now I'm stuck with high bills for very slow "hi speed" internet because I live out in the country! I understand there are funds available for my energy co to help with funding to improve my chances of getting efficient and reasonable internet like people living in the cities. I understand those funds can not be accessed by energy companies at this time. Why is that if the funds were allocated for that purpose why aren't us country people as lucky??? **Hank & Jan R.**

We have tried satellite internet and our service was very intermittent. We got rid of it. Another local provider wanted us to pay \$3,000 to put a booster up to our house to provide the service they were offering other neighbors because our house was too far off the road. It would be nice to be offered services that others take for granted at a fair price. **Cheryl R.**

Our rural area is less than 4 miles from the nearest town yet the only access we have to internet is either dial-up service or satellite. It is impossible to do anything via dial-up because it is much too slow for today's electronics. Satellite service is better than dial-up but is still extremely slow. With satellite service you may as well shut down if it's raining or snowing because of the constant service interruptions and loss of signal. It is also very important now for all of our school kids, rural included, to have access to broadband as part of their education. Rural kids are compromised educationally by the lack of broadband. Our place of business is also rural and we have a terrible time with the lack of speed with our service. Our business is on a class A state road with broadband less than 1 mile away yet we have to rely on the hotspot provided via our cell phones for internet service. With that lack of signal in many rural areas it's very frustrating. We need change and we need it soon. **Leesa G.**

To date, the only options to us in rural Michigan are dial-up and satellite internet service. Dial-up is totally inadequate in this day and age. Satellite service is expensive for limited bandwidth usage. Our phone service provider has promised, for years, to bring broadband service to rural communities. Right now they are only offering satellite service through Hughes. We cannot even allow our grandchildren the use of our internet service when they visit because of the limited bandwidth allowances we currently have. Our electric coop has been trying to help, but without adequate funding, they have no chance of improving our internet choices. We, rural Americans, need the same access to quality and affordable broadband services that our urban neighbors have! **Leslie M.**

After my discharge as a Nike-Hercules data tech., I started my communications career with Michigan Bell in the Kalamazoo area. The prevailing technology consisted of 10-party lines and open-wire (the poles with cross-arms and unshielded copper wire). When I retired, the urban areas were competitive and fiber-optic facilities were available - those of us in the rural areas had dial-up. My cable company offers High Speed Internet but when I place my order with an agent, I receive a call a few days later from a supervisor who states that it's not available "at my address", and, yup, it's the same address to which they send my bill. My power company some time ago offered Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) and I supported it until I learned that the unshielded signal interfered with emergency channels and that there were severe limitations to the service, and then there was a problem when the company with which my power company was working just refused to proceed further in solving the multiple insurmountable problems. Even though I'm in Frontier Communications territory I have a grand-fathered old Michigan Bell (now AT&T) line that was established in the '50's when this property was even more rural than it is today. The line qualifies for UVerse HSI because it's available at the Video Ready Access Device (VRAD) on the pad that furnishes my dial-tone, but AT&T has removed their field techs from UVerse HSI to concentrate on UVerse Bundled TV/HSI/Voice. As I had mentioned earlier, my property is in Frontier Communications territory but has never had cable run to it from the south because they couldn't ever recoup the costs associated with the cable, plowing, pedestal cut-over, etc. **Frontier encouraged me to go with their satellite service because I had mentioned that I receive post cards (post cards!!!) from HughesNet, but HughesNet disallowed my having their service because it wasn't available at my address (yup, the same address to which they sent the POST CARD). But when Frontier and I discussed satellite dish service for Internet, I was informed that it really wasn't available at my address after all; she informed me that Frontier is a re-seller of HughesNet.** As an alternative, the Frontier agent offered me their ADSL (Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Line) and when I informed her that there was no Frontier cable at my house, she said she would do a work order to place a very long buried drop from the pedestal to the south of me - I do have ADSL on 25,440 feet of cable and have 990Mbps(DN) and 340kbs(UP). It's certainly better than dial-up, but websites are not compatible with those rates either, and, as a side-note, video ads seem to have the most difficulty downloading. **Of unloaded copper pairs, microwave, satellite and cellular wireless, they all share the same faults: poor bandwidth, congestion at the hub, and unreliable full-duplex signal strengths.** The -only- facility that can address those faults is Fiber-to-the-Home, with the added advantages that FTTH offers reliability and security by virtue of its construction and equipment. Anything other than FTTH is merely a digital version of a 10-party line on open-wire. **Victor K.**

**I am surrounded by high speed users in towns and populated areas but I am forced to pay high prices for satellite internet. This is not a reliable choice and very expensive.** Please allow the funds for true "Rural America" to those who have our best interests at heart. Not to the status quo who refuse to provide me with true Broad band internet. To them I am insignificant. Someday they may deem me worthy but they say it is not in the foreseeable future. **Deborah B.**

We have been waiting for several years for Midwest Electric to provide us with high speed internet service. We are asking that the FCC change their policy concerning the needs of rural Americans like us with solutions. It has been ridiculous that we can't get high speed internet, but Alaskans can. **Donald S.**

**Yes in rural areas we are extremely limited on broadband options; sometimes only allowing us satellite internet which is terrible and extremely overpriced! !!!!!** We need to be entitled to the same options as everybody else regardless of where we live! Thank you Midwest for coming together to help us!! **Kristie P.**

I live in an area that does not have access to cable internet or DSL internet, the only internet available is dial-up internet and satellite internet. Dial-up internet is too slow to be worthwhile and satellite internet is too expensive for the speeds available. **John N.**

I have been extremely excited to hear that there might be an option for internet service that will work at my home (w/ Midwest). Due to the trees around the property satellite is not really an option, not while the leaves are on the trees. I currently have a Mifi thru Verizon... but due to the location at times that is not much better than the old dial-up. Comcast does not run down my road. And have been told we can not get a DSL line. My husband is self employed and it would make things much easier if we could send and receive information via internet access. I am in hopes that it is a possibility in the near future to access this Broadband via my electric Cooperative, it would make our lives so much easier. I just ask that you think of the people in the rural areas, that have no options, and help make this a great experience. Thanks for your time. I appreciate everything that you can do to expedite us getting access to this service. **Tracy I.**

Hughes Net has me bent over a barrel. **Bill A.**

Satellite has been expensive and unaffordable. Mostly is was unreliable. We almost feel like our family is lost in the 80's without the high speed internet our friends have closer to town. It is long overdue ! **Pam S.**

Joe and Tim installed my (Midwest) internet earlier this month. Both very friendly, knowledgeable and professional. Thanks guys and good luck Joe! **Jenny B.**

Thus far the Midwest Team has done a wonderful job. From Jennifer taking all my questions, to the guys running the lines to the house, and especially the technician who came to the house (twice) to make sure our device was functioning properly and the connections were good. It has been a very wonderful transition from our WI-FI hotspot to a fixed connection. Keep up the great job! **The M. Family**

I only have one choice. That provider's capabilities are have what I had in the city and they cost double. My bill has gone up 150% over the last year because I wouldn't sign up for there TV offering. Additionally, the connection drops out for minutes at a time making it mostly impossible to work or stream any sort of digital content. There has to be a better way!!! Thank you. **Micah D.**

Please get broad band for us. We recieve invitations to all kinds of "High-speed" internets in the mail. When we contact the company offering the internet, we are told that it is not in our area. Yet, houses less that a mile away are connected to the same internet. What is wrong with this picture???????????? Our Township Supervisor, works for Microsoft and bought his home on the condition that Comcast would run cable under US 12, east of Edwardsburg so he has access to high speed. He has been working with Michiana supernet to cain access for us. We were told we would have high speed by the first of December 2013, now we are told it will be sometime in the fall of 2014 Getthe price down to where the average retired citizen can afford the price also we are retired and money does not go as far as it used to, so something econmical. **Ann & Herbert B.**

Currently my only option for receiving high speed internet is through a satellite service. I have Hughes Net. It is high speed, but very limited, their average customers like myself are limited to 10gigs per month. Sure I can pay more and get a few more gigs that I would again be limited to. Netflix and other streaming services are not an option for me on limited bandwidth. All I want is to be able to have access to unlimited bandwidth. **Brian B.**

Satellite internet is horrible. I pay 70 bucks a month for internet because I live in a rural area. And can't even use it for a full month. About 20 days in, I hit my maximum allowance of upload/download. It's ridiculous. I can't even do online racing with all of my friends because my ping is like 900. Theirs is a 70. **Brent S.**

I ordered Hughes net for my kids because it is necessary for school now a days. There grades were suffering not having it and the library is a ways away. It was very expensive something that we really had to add, but was difficult to afford anyway it still didn't work half the time when we needed it. Everyone keeps saying help kids then get the internet available for our children to be able to do the projects that schools assign on line!! **Sharon H.**

I am an IT professional working as such for a local health system that includes at least 3 hospitals over a 30 miles radius. As most IT professionals I am required to be on-call. For everyone in my position this means getting a call in the middle of the night and having to respond. I many times have to get dressed and drive to a fast food establishment that offers wi-fi Internet access to connect to our internal corporate network in order to log into our system to see what is wrong and try to correct it remotely. This I can of do without high-speed I teensy access from home. I also could finish college on-line from home if I had high-speed Internet access. But, I live in the country and there is only one company that provides a landline phone. The infrastructure is so old that DSL Internet over phone lines is not supported. There is no cable infrastructure available in my area for cable modem access either. I have a large family and would like to be a me to afford broadband I ted er access where I live I Dowagiac, Michigan. **Cory M.**

I have been miserable trying to find any one company to cover my area for Internet and have exhausted what I'm limited to. I had to use Hugh's net satellite which is costly and have to commit to a 2 year contract. I have has to have dial up which is very slow. I would really Like to see broadband in my rural area. I have been at my current home for 15+ years and gave not seen any improvements to get anything more in my area. I'm very upset that we cannot get what most people have. **Debra L.**

My service is awful. I have AT&T and the speed is unreliable and lack luster. I am in the technology field and travel the world for work, i desperately need a fast and reliable ISP. There are several in my area that offer fiber to within a few miles of my house but can't get the funds to extend the feed lines to my area. Please help. **Dan S.**

Rural broadband could be so much better. Currently, there is only one company to provide service, and the service is terrible. Very slow connections,inability to stream, or watch any type of video. The service company provides minimal customer service, and does not seem to care if or when we do have service. Please help! We are only 3 1/2 miles from town, and feel like we are living in a third world country. Thank you. **Sharon Z.**

Due to my location in a rural area, my only access to internet is by sattelite dish. I am limited to 10 Gigabytes a month. I am a special education teacher and I have a lot of work to do at home by internet. Due to the slow speeds and limited gigs, I struggle to complete paper work and it takes hours to complete what can be done a half the time at school. High speed inter net is available 2 houses away because the house faces a busier street. I think it is very unfair that internet is available just yards away from my house but my road is excluded because few people live on it. Both ends of my road have Comcast or Frontier. I would like to see high speed internet available to every one and the power companies have a great way to address this. Please allocate money to make internet available at a reasonable spped and price. **Susan L.**

When my wife and I moved just outside of Buchanan, MI (a small town in SW Michigan) two years ago, I started to investigate how we might be able to get some type of High Speed Internet (HSI) for our home and the homes of about 50 other home sites in our community. Several of us in the community established a Work Group to investigate HSI through Comcast and through our local Phone Service Company, AT&T. Here's what we found: 1. Comcast: The Work Group members had numerous discussions with Comcast Representatives over approximately a 10 month period in 2010 and 2011. It appeared from our discussions that Comcast was initially very interested in servicing our community; and then a Comcast representative indicated there was an upfront requirement for rural homeowners to pay 1/3 of total HSI installation costs with Comcast covering the remainder. Late in our discussions with Comcast, the representative started quoting a required community payment of at least \$100,000 to install HSI (and then, of course, Comcast would charge each home the standard monthly billing for the service) but the representative would not or could not verify the HSI \$100,000 number. Finally, Comcast indicated that to get their fiber cable to the subdivision (the current Comcast line was approx. 3.5 miles from our community of homes) and install the cable throughout the subdivision would cost Comcast in excess of \$347K. Consequently, Comcast was not interested in investing any large amount of money to bring HSI to our community. 2. AT&T DSL or Uverse. Our Work Group members also made numerous contacts with AT&T representatives over the same 10 month period of 2010-2011. AT&T was not interested in any discussions about installing DSL. AT&T was not rolling out its DSL format any longer because AT&T was now (1) focusing their capital and energy on upgrading their phone wireless networks and (2) they are putting in Uverse instead of DSL. But the closest areas that had Uverse were Kalamazoo ((70 mi away) and South Bend (30 mi away). If AT&T charged our community for somewhere near full cost of installation as with Comcast, the cost of bringing Uverse out to Buchanan would be unrealistic and a non-starter. Dependable, High Speed Internet service is no longer a luxury; we believe that it is akin to a public utility that will bring immediate benefits to a large number of homeowners in our community and many other rural communities near us. One realtor actually commented that the availability of high speed Internet and TV Service is an important feature to perspective home buyers. In fact, 80% of Berrien County (where we are located) already gets high speed, high quality, fixed DSL/Cable Service while our community and many others like us are struggling with phone service internet that is mediocre at best. Why can't we get High Speed Internet Service without making an initial install payment we can't possibly afford? Please help bring our community and many like us into the 21st Century!! **Kenneth P.**

So at the dentist today one of the ladies is on our (Midwest) Edwardsburg list. She is SO excited and was telling me all about it. She was asking lots of questions and can't wait. She has Frontier nad told me all the issues with it. Her mom lives on Pokagon Highway and works for the state from a home office. She is using a mi-fi and can't wait until we can offer it in her area. **Angie E.** (Note: Angie is a Midwest Energy associate)

We are over two miles from the nearest town and the only form of internet service we can obtain is satellite. This is sometimes thought of as "broadband" but in fact it has very severe quotas limits on data transmission and latency problems prohibit even using it for certain services. It is also very expensive. I fully support our Cooperatives effort to obtain CAF funds to establish a "fiber to the home" model for internet service. By any measure, rural residents have greatly diminished access to broadband service compared to those in cities and this would bring parity in service to our families and farm businesses. **Stephen L.**

I waited a long time for good broadband coverage but have failed at various suppliers because of my location. I have resorted to satellite support, only to find it mediocre in service and high price. **Louis S.**

Our neighborhood has no choice for internet except wireless carriers, and satellite. At this time, the wireless carriers are inconsistent (multiple nights without service or very very slow service with disconnections) and very expensive. The Sprint carrier service has breakdowns monthly and this causes issues with homework assignments, online class attendance and other difficulties. We've contacted the local cable company and our legislators to no avail. The local cable service provider said we were in a low population density zone and it was not profitable for them to add our service. However, for \$35,000 they would run a line to service the 8 - 10 customers on our street. In this day and age, we cannot afford that up front fee on top of already high service premiums. We deserve quality and affordable broadband service. Thank You. **Craig H.**

Rural broadband is not GOOD ENOUGH!!! There is not enough competition and limited access. While huge improvements have been made with satellite internet and wireless availability (by cell phone) the data is limited and the prices are high. Before the recent speed improvements we were using all of our monthly allotment of data before the end of the month. Now with the speed improvements we easily use all of our data in 2 weeks. We currently pay \$80/month for 15 gb of data using satellite internet and it is used up in 2 weeks then we are left without internet for 2 weeks or forced to pay \$10/gb overages. Compare that to the rates of AT&T and Comcast. It doesn't even come close! I feel like we are being taken advantage of! **JoAnn P.**

I am trying to run a Real Estate business from my home. I have suffered with satellite service that is slow, limits my usage and does not work on heavy rain and snow days. **Vickie H.**

Living in a rural area for over 25 there have not been many options for our internet needs. For years my land line phone co. sent fliers in with my bill and for years they told me maybe next year they would have access in my area. That never happened. I am excited to finally have an option (Midwest) that I am happy with. I cannot wait to be hooked up. **Deb P.**

Satellite internet is the only broadband option available to us. The monthly data limits prevent us from utilize work from home options. **Joseph H.**

My (former) phone provider has been advertising high speed internet for several years, but when I ask if it's available in my area they always say no. And they can't even keep the phone working. I would rather depend on a reliable company like my electric co-op. **Helen K.**

We have had Hughes Net and hated that service. We currently have Wildblue which is nice but costly. We need something less expensive and more available since we do not have many options living in the country. **Mark E.**

I am one of the lucky ones if you call it that. I found a provider in Florida for a very slow DSL hook up in Michigan (odd but it works). I do have internet but slow. I have many friends that are still trying to get something. Strange that in this day and age it is that hard to get something affordable. I am assuming the wireless providers have lobbyist that are keeping affordable internet away from us? Thank you. **Mark H.**

As a member of Midwest Coop for electricity and recently joining for propane supply - the service provided by Midwest for broadband would be exceptional. Midwest Electric service has always been outstanding. Diversification of broadband service in rural community is something that needs to be allowed and Midwest Coop broadband would be an tremendous asset to our community. **Beverly W.**

Where I live we can only get satellite internet. We have only recently moved into the rural area and having come from the city, where comcast unlimited internet was what we used, the satellite internet is ridiculous! we are paying twice as much as we did for comcast for a service that does not even compare to comcast. we get 15 gb a month and pay \$80 a month and that's with a discount. I am a full time college student as well as having three children in school full time, having internet is a must. We can not even watch a youtube video because it eats up our gb, we can not enjoy on demand tv because it requires internet and it uses up all our gb. This is ridiculous just because of where we live. It would be wonderful to have a better option, a more affordable option! **Gina C.**

Absolutely need broadband in rural areas. We moved four miles outside of Vicksburg Michigan and we have become nearly disconnected from the internet. There are satellite options but the cost is overwhelming and the service is marginal at best. Rural broadband is desperately needed!! **Garrett E.**

To Whom It May Concern: We moved to rural Cassopolis, Michigan in March of 2010. Besides the fact that we wanted to move out of the cities and enjoy the outdoors, we chose to buy this home because we were told by a broadband company that we could get service at our address to be. My wife has an internet based business and is a business partner with Yahoo! We HAVE to have internet! After buying our property and moving here, it turned out that although broadband is available to the "area", it isn't actually available where we bought. (I was told that service is available 1/2 mile away, but not "profitable" to run down our street) We then tried Hughes net. What a joke. We have since tried a T-1 line (@ \$750/month) and so on. We ultimately rented a business property in town, bought broadband internet, and pay utilities, in order to meet my wife's work/internet requirements. A bit excessive, don't you think? We need a broadband internet provider, and we need it NOW! **Michael S.**

The only internet i can get at my house is dial up so I have to use a hotspot. i am not able to stream movies or use Pandora or Netflix because it would cost me thousands of dollars a month. i often work from home so a high speed connection would be life changing. **Christine S.**

I live in a rural area without broadband service. We have tried Hughes net satellite which was terrible. Now we work with a slow wireless which is also difficult. It makes it hard for my children to work online for school work. In addition I own a business in West Michigan that employs over 200 people. The lack of broadband at my home makes it almost impossible to work from home and communicate with my office and staff. Many of the files we work with are very large and I can not download them. Simple example is updating my I phone. What takes minutes in my office takes hours at home. **Rob A.**

I live in rural Cass County. I am not able to have access to ANY kind of high speed Internet. My only choice for Internet is dial-up. I check with a variety of Internet providers every few months and hear the same thing time and again, "Sorry, not available in your area." With dial-up, I can't open my yahoo email. The page has so many graphics and other things loading that even after waiting 30 minutes, the inbox page is not loaded. This is incredibly frustrating. I don't even try to open Facebook or Google maps or any other webpage that uses graphics. I had to call a staff person to go onto the TV website to post that the Library where I am director was closed due to snow. I could not even do that from home. I borrowed a device that is supposed to give you access to high speed satellite Internet, to see if I could use that method of connection. However, it did not receive a signal at my home. I would love to have access to high speed internet via my electric company. They provide excellent service that is actually available where I live. They are very responsive to customers needs and concerns. **Karen G.**

I have waited several years for a cheaper broadband solution to rural areas and finally hooked up a Hughes net satellite system through Frontier telephone. It is frustrating because the broadband system stops less than a mile from my home. **Elsie J.**

I seem to live in a "black Hole" for broadband internet. Satellite internet is literally my only choice and it is incredibly expensive. I have personally gone to the offices of several local broadband internet companies to find out if they can run a line down the road I live on and the answer has been NO (frontier, comcast, charter etc.)! Even though all the streets in a small radius around me have broadband internet. I even offered to pay to have a line run to my house and I was told they will never do that. The excuse is that there are not enough houses on the private lane I live on ( there are in fact 10 houses on the 1/2 mile dead-end lane). I live slightly out of town in what is considered a rural area, but I am by no means in the middle of nowhere. It is extremely frustrating that neighbors all around me have the opportunity for such services but I have been searching for YEARS and in this day and age I cannot get what should be readily available to everyone. I dont live on the top of a mountain or on an island somewhere, but in a relatively populated area. You have no idea how frustrating this quest has been. I struggle to afford the satellite service, but have to have internet for my kids to complete required school assignments. HELP PLEASE!! **Nicole H.**

I moved to my current home in Schoolcraft, MI, a rural farming setting in southwest Kalamazoo County in 1986. When it became convenient and desirable to have an e-mail account in the late 80's and early 90's we set up an account with AOL over dial-up lines, a very slow system of internet access. Nothing has changed with AOL over the years, except to actually get slower as more customers joined the "Internet Revolution" and crowded, then swamped, the AOL train. As broadband became available to city dwellers across America, we in rural America were forgotten. The cell phone providers capitalized on the opportunity by offering low- to intermediate-speed, but highly unreliable, cell-dependent service at high cost. The satellite providers attempted to cash in as well, with high costs, medium download speeds and low-speed uploads. No one but the Midwest Electric Power Coop has tried to actually provide high-speed service to the rural communities. And now the foot dragging by Congress and the FCC because of incumbent provider lobbying and pressure is threatening even the possibility of bringing us the type of internet accessibility that the rest of the developed world, and even the underdeveloped world enjoys and takes for granted. Please help us as a nation compete with the rest of the world in trade, innovation and politics by leveling the playing field and bringing high-speed internet to the forgotten rural Americans. We vote too. We like movies too. We like communicating, sending pictures and video to our relatives and friends too. Do not remain prejudiced against us just because of where we live. **Robert P.**

Rural Broadband at this point is a joke. Both cellular cards and satellite internet suffer from terrible congestion problems, outages, tiny data caps, and rates that are much higher than cable or DSL for the service provided. With todays technologies and demands for internet DSL is to slow to meet the demand. A high speed physical connection to the internet is as necessary today as it was decades ago to have a phone line at your home. **Ted R.**

I work from home with a heavy reliance on my internet connection. The best connection that I can get is a DSL connection that peaks out at a little less than 5 mbps download and .72 mbps upload. This speed is not consistent and I often get bounced off of conference calls and webinars due to internet issues. I have tried a 4G broadband and it was much faster but not economically a viable option. **David Y.**

There is only satellite internet high speed in our area and for my parents that live less than 1/2 mile away from me can't even get signal for that so they have to pay top dollar for sprint card and even that doesn't get a good signal. So we are very limited on what we can get in the country. **Michelle S.**

Absolutely. From what I've seen, Comcast and Frontier have no real intentions of providing service to truly rural areas. I understand that. They're owned by shareholders and investments need to be made so as to ensure a return on their dollar. That said, step aside and let those utilities familiar with rural areas (i.e., Midwest Energy) deploy. Unless CAF Phase II is allocated properly, a \$9 billion opportunity will be squandered, leaving rural areas in the (broadband) dark. There's a reason rural areas are losing population in America. People need to work and study at home. More importantly, they are being required to apply for jobs, drivers license renewals and health care online. Basic broadband doesn't cut it. Unreliable broadband isn't sufficient. If low-cost, reliable broadband access is not available in rural America, people will move back to nearby cities. Can our cities accommodate the stress on its already decaying infrastructure? I doubt it. Please, please avail CAF Phase II to anyone/anybody able and willing to provide a meaningful broadband solution in the rural space. Be creative. Listen to citizens. There are entities ready and able to help us. Ask yourself one question, "Can we do better?" Yes you can! Facilitate solutions. Promote competition. Move past the status quo (which hasn't worked) and promote common sense change! Our futures quite literally depend on it! **David A.**

I have used high cost slow satellite broadband that craps out when it rains hard. I have used high cost dsl that my neighbors can't get from Frontier. The bandwidth is insufficient. It is time to come up with an affordable broadband solution in rural Cass County Michigan. **Terry P.**

I am lucky enough to have access to Comcast, even being out of town, but for those without it, if DSL isn't available (or isn't up to par in their area) there isn't a viable option. Cell coverage has helped, but satellite is worthless. It is time that every address has access to a quality Internet connection. **Josh E.**

In our area (north of Dowagiac) there is only Hughes net which I feel is way overpriced. I've used dial up and it's ridiculous if you have anything important to do. I would LOVE to have an affordable choice! I now use the computers at the library or Council on Aging. **Cecilia K.** (Note: The Council on Aging was Midwest's 1,000 fiber customer.)

We pay 110.00 on average a month for 12 GB of data thru our MiFi device, but it's slow as dial up, my teenagers can't do online classes for school, no videos/movies, nothing that requires fast internet. So we pay 51.00 for my mothers house in town to have broadband so they can do all school work there. So in total we are paying 161.00 a month for internet because we live out in the country. Doesn't seem fair at all..... **Kathryn M.**

We have lived in and loved our rural home for over 10 years. The only nightmare of living "in the country" is the ridiculously expensive and unreliable satellite based Internet service. Not only do we pay 3times more than non-rural consumers we also have limitations on band width which are outdated due to demands of today's technology. Have to work from home and it's raining, snowing or the wind is blowing?? Forget it. Your Internet service won't work. Better luck at 2 am when there's "less traffic". I have a professional job that allows me to work from a home office 2 days per week but am unable to do so without a reliable form of Internet service. It is about time that the rest of the world realizes that just because we chose to live outside the city limits doesn't mean we are uneducated people without jobs and have no need for Internet service. I can't even pay my daughter's school lunch money or check her grades without getting online. This is a necessity in 2014 NOT a luxury!! **Tiffany M.**

WE LIVE IN A SERVICE DEAD ZONE. WE CAN'T GET AT&T, VERIZON, CABLE, AND OUR ONLY INTERNET OPTIONS ARE EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE FOR VERY POOR SERVICE. EXPANDING FIBER TO RURAL AREAS WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED BY ALL OF US THAT ARE IN THE "MIDDLE OF NOWHERE". **Kevin W.**

Super excited for this (Midwest fiber)! So sick of paying for a house phone that is never used for my DSL. Please hurry and come to the Mattawan area! **Megan H.**

This (Midwest fiber) is awesome. We have ATT DSL right now, and it is so unreliable (but definitely cheap--\$30 per month). I am dying for your service and was so excited to learn about it. Please bring it to us soon on R Ave. We really need it, because we have so few options. Comcast is not an option. **Dish services are way too expensive and have unreasonable download limits.** Although we have DSL, it is so slow and only works about 60% of the time. Please hurry to our area! **Stephanie P.**

**I have exede Satellite and spend a minimum of \$140 per month with a data cap of 25gig which is not much data. When I go over I spend \$10 per gig of additional data. i have no other options, it is the price I pay to enjoy living in the country and having a home office.** I have been waiting 13 years for this miracle to happen. Thank You (Midwest). **Bernd K.**

We need a broadband in small towns and rural areas. If we can get one that is our only choice. Some can't even get one. It needs to be offered to everyone at a cheaper price and one that works all the time. We need it for education, business, everything in our lives. **Kathy W.**

We are unable to access any internet, other than what our cell phones can access. This makes high tech jobs unavailable and our children can't even access information for homework projects. The Internet goes beyond fun and games, we have many health care issues that could be eased by sending emails and logging into hospitals but we are in a rural area and stuck to low strength cell phones or snail mail. **Melissa N.**

Was very pleased when Verizon first offered DSL. However have the slowest offered that goes out in the summer when the lake areas are occupied. Would appreciate faster more reliable service. **Richard H.**

Do not have it available and would love to have the access. In this day and age, where more and more businesses are moving towards online services and resources, it is almost a necessity that you have access to broadband services. Not to mention the role education is playing in moving the learning process more and more towards the world wide web. It is time that the rural areas of America have the same access as those in non-rural areas. **Chandra A.**

We live in the country and decided to go to wireless router to improve our internet. I would have preferred a high speed connection but that was unavailable to us. We have families with school age children on our road, I'm sure high speed internet would be a big help to them with their education. **Bruce Van E.**

Hi, I live three miles from Dowagiac and work from home. Internet is a must for my job. **My options are very slow DSL that frequently is throttled or somewhat faster satellite that costs \$140 month or more if I have to go over the minimal amount of use allowed.** It's true that there's no incentive for these broadband companies to serve rural areas and their promised to do so when they are granted franchises are lies. Please make them live up to their responsibilities. **Caroline P.**

**We have hughesnet and it is so slow, would love to have something faster but there is not much to choose from out in the country.** **Becky W.**

We are business owners and do a lot of work on the computer serving customers through our web site. We try to answer our customers needs very quickly which can sometimes be a problem from home because our internet service is very very bad. We currently use Frontier DSL. We would be very happy to have other options come along with better and faster service. **Vikki T.**

We are business owners and do a lot of work on the computer serving customers through our web site. We try to answer our customers needs very quickly which can sometimes be a problem from home because our internet service is very very bad. We currently use Frontier DSL. We would be very happy to have other options come along with better and faster service. **Susan D.**

We have repeatedly tried to access some high-speed internet, contacting many different providers. We have not had any success, in spite of having been assured that our area would be having such internet access-either through updated phone lines or through the electrical lines to rural consumers. It is VERY frustrating and the only way that we have been able to have internet access, other than dial-up, is to buy a mobile broadband "hotspot" which has marginally better internet access than the dial-up access. PLEASE help us get something better!!!! **Cheryll L.**

Dial up internet or expensive satellite internet are the only options that I have available and neither are 100 % reliable. **Kimberley W.**

Until August 2013, no internet was available where I live. All providers said they did not serve my location. Comcast is the only provider I am aware of providing internet services to my rural home. I've contacted others, but all the providers I could find said they did not serve my location. Prices at Comcast vary every time I call. There is no standard price for any of their services. I must check every six months (when my bill suddenly increases) to see if Comcast at that time is offering a new 'special' price for the internet service. I do not want TV, but my current price for internet services is lower because the internet is 'bundled' with TV service. I don't use the TV service, but I was Comcast demanded I be sent a TV hook-up package if I wanted to get the better 'bundled' internet/TV price. **Perry S.**

There is no broadband that is affordable available and adequate for my family where we live. Once had a satellite for internet service but price was outrageous and we would run out of data within five days. I have five school age children whom all need internet time but I cant do it. **Angela L.**

I am a Michigan licensed real estate broker, and have dial up service. I cannot run my business without driving 3 miles to my office to get fast internet service. Also, our son lives in China and we could call him and use Skype if we had good internet service. I would love to see our son when I am talking with him. Other countries in the third world have better internet service than rural America. Seems like this country could spend our own tax money on us Americans for once, instead of using it to wage war and buy military weapons to kill people on the other side of the world! **Germaine B.**

Satellite internet service is more than double for speeds that are barely faster than old dialup. supposed high speed service will cost an arm and leg. **Stephen G.**

Currently we have internet service through our land-line phone company (Verizon) = crappy service and very slow including many mysterious blackouts having nothing to do with weather. We may have an alternative in Comcast (cable), but that is its own little monopoly and not to be trusted long-term re: rates. We really should have some high-speed competitive choices. **Bruce M.**

I am at the mercy of satellite internet. This is neither affordable nor good quality service. Midwest continues to look for answers for many energy and communication problems that their customers face I have faith that given the opportunity and funds to continue their research they will provide their customers with better solutions in the future.. **David K.**

I don't currently have Internet because the satellite Internet available is very unaffordable and in reliable. If we could get reliable Internet in our area and waste gas to go somewhere for reliable Internet I might be able to swing the extra cash. I work as a telecommunications installer which includes Internet, phone, and television and it's very disappointing knowing that I would have to pay up to 3 to 4 times as much money to get less than half the speed provided by some of these larger companies. **Alex D.**

We have tried for years to get internet service at our rural residence. Dial up service is available and that's all. And dial up is only available if you have a home phone line. We use cell phones so we don't have, nor do we want a home phone line. Help us catch up with the 21st century. Please demand FCC policy change to allow us the same choices or at least choices for affordable broadband service. **Barbara P.**

I cant keep my business competitive without broadband internet or access normal everyday things like online banking. Current Broadband options are horrendous. We must have an open marketplace of provider so we can stay be competitive on a global scale. America is already way behind(15th globally). **Kevin O.**

We need fast internet service out here. The phone lines are so thin than they cannot good data. **Wireless is a joke, satellite has way too many faults.** We need affordable broadband here. **John. F.**

It is literally unbelievable that in today's age I can not get anything better than 3 mbps when there is a fiber line running down the highway less than 300 yards from my house. I work from home as a software engineer. Mobile offices are not only a convenience in today's world of long working hours. They are a net positive for environmental concerns, wear and tear on infrastructure, as well as family breakdowns because parents are either working or commuting instead of parenting. Not only that, it spreads out people so they don't have to live on top of each other. Extending high paying jobs to rural communities that would otherwise not be able to support such careers help the educational prospects for students in those areas, it injects tax revenue, and strengthens the freedom of people to live and work as they please. It also allows businesses to cut their costs as they can hire workers who are not restricted to living in high cost areas like suburbs and downtown in major cities. From an environmental perspective, we are always talking about ways to reduce our energy usage, carbon footprint, etc. If you took 25% of cars off the road during rush hour you would demonstrably reduce all of that. The wear and tear on the roads would be significantly reduced. The need for gas would be significantly reduced as there would be less cars on the road, less cars sitting idle in traffic jams, highly inefficient office spaces could be downsized reducing the energy costs to light, heat/cool, and maintain such buildings. In order to work effectively off-site, high bandwidth services such as streaming video, desktop sharing and voice communications are necessities. However, low bandwidth availability makes those types of things difficult to impossible. Ubiquitous, high bandwidth network services available at affordable costs everywhere, including rural areas, is in my opinion the most important, strategic infrastructure investment that we can make. It's more than just watching youtube videos and facebook. **Michael N.**

The only access to broadband we have is through satellite technology which is extremely expensive as compared to cable systems in densely populated areas. **Edward K.**

I am an engineer and am hindered considerably on trying to work from home in the evenings or on the weekends. Though my DSL provides a consistent line, it has incredibly poor upload and download speeds which makes doing simple tasks like viewing files from my company's server very time-consuming. These slow speeds also hinder my wife and I from trying to do much at the same time online. We would certainly subscribe and appreciate having an internet connection at least equal to what we had in Kalamazoo. **Garrick E.**

We live in a very rural area, between Decatur, Lawton and Marcellus, MI. There is no cable access for us. The landline telephone for dialup service is lacking. Not to mention we cancelled the phone to house service when it was still Verizon. Our only Internet access is through Sprint. Sprint has a Data Tower just down the road from us. It is a heavily used tower. Since it is nearly the only access point in our neighborhood. I am sure the farmers and businesses in the area utilize this tower. Other wireless providers may offer data service. However, Sprint happens to be the one of the tower closest to us. Our cell provider is AT&T. But we can barely get service in the house with them. **The satellite Internet providers cannot provide a decent service at a reasonable cost. I don't care what the satellite providers tell you or advertise. Their service is just not adequate and too costly.** **Gary L.**

I have one provider locally with intermittent service interruptions. Broadband without consistent service is almost worse than no broad band at all. The total lack of competition insures that quality standards and promises have no tangible meaning. Meaningful participation in the current national community - from the ability to find jobs, to Healthcare Signups to paying taxes - is increasingly dependent on the availability of quality, high speed internet access. **Lynetta C.**

I live in a area where I can get nothing but mobile internet, and mobile internet has increased rates. With this rate increase I am not sure at this point how I am going to be able to keep my business going unless something changes! On top of that kids now days have sooo much school work that is done online including homework assignments, lectures etc. **WE have to many trees for satellite and the sad part is broadband is less than 1/2 mile from me but they refuse to bring it up our road.** **Laura B.**

High speed internet is a half mile away but comcast refuses to bring it any closer. It is frustrating and infuriating! AOL stopped working. The only option was a hotspot, which is very expensive. **Marjorie S.**

Until cable TV came to my area, I had to rely on dial-up ISP's and their very slow speeds and short usage windows. I imagine that living further from populous areas still present 20th century connectivity issues. The FCC needs to change their ways of doing business for the internet. **Richard T.**

It definitely can be improved. Our only choice was verizon when we first moved to the country. They soon sold our area to frontier. Our service has been mediocre at best. Wifi is very slow. This is a problem for schoolwork. The kids have to take turns as the wifi slows more and more with additional users. We would love to see some competition in the broadband area, but not higher prices. **Paul Y.**

At our residence we are unable to receive high speed internet connection due to the location. **We have used satellite in the past, however the cost verses quality isn't worth it.** Today we are forced to use our cell phones as a hot spot, which limits what we can do. We are both enrolled in college, due to our internet disability, it limits our ability to use any on-line courses. An affordable high speed connection in today's world is as essential as phone and electricity. **Don W.**

It has been a constant struggle to find reliable, fast and affordable internet service in our rural area since we built our new home 8 years ago. **Satellite service is expensive and a slave to the weather.. Even the smallest rain storm will cause interruptions in service. The provider's answer is to "wait for the weather to clear and try again"...** Our initial satellite provider took advantage of their status as the only major internet provider in the area by true price gouging. After much searching we have a more reasonable provider that is also more reliable, but speed of this type of broadband is much less than other types of service such as cable and fiber which are still not available to us. It is no longer acceptable to have just "adequate" broadband. Everything in our culture these days relies upon the internet and is only becoming more so as time goes along. Better internet service that is affordable to everyone should be a priority in our country! We should not have to move to an urban area to have fast, affordable and reliable broadband internet service !!! **Jan N.**

When I lived in New Hampshire I had a home based customer service business. When i moved to Michigan I was forced to quit my lucrative home based business due to the availability of high speed internet service. I would really like to be involved in this business again. High speed internet needs to be available for rural customers with the security options for credit card use. I would like to be employed again. It was a great business as I didn't have to leave home and I could choose my hours of employment. I am 65 and retired but certainly could use an income supplement. Also, it seems that employers are reluctant to employ senior citizens as I have been applying for several positions to no avail. **Lois B.**

For over 6 years I received notices for broadband coverage from then Verizon (the telephone services provider in my area). Each time I attempted to sign up for the service, I was told in the final analysis that it was unavailable to me. Internet service was finally received only after a complaint was filed with the State of Michigan Attorney General Office. Broadband service in Lenawee County Michigan is difficult to get if you do not live within a certain distance from a city and is non-existent for some due to outdated power lines. If telephone providers have been eligible for and/or receiving funds to extend coverage to rural America, it has failed in this area. **Satellite wireless is available but is still to expensive for most households.** **Mary B.**

We have lived in the Hartford, Mi area since 1989 and have not had any options to high speed internet. The only option we have is broadband service through our cell phone provider for a very high price of \$100.00 a month and that is not for unlimited usage. If we go over our budget we are charged a high overage fee. We have children who live in Az. and Ca. and cannot receive video of our grandchildren because our internet is so slow and the amount of data it uses up. We cannot stream any video's or movies ever. We pay into the funds that should upgrade our area in our regular and cell phone bills. I get advertising about high speed internet and when I call about it they tell me it's not available in our area. This is 2014, 15 years of dealing with technology that is way out of date. Please do something to help us rural customers get the same technology as bigger communities have. My husband waits for hours to view obituaries from the MLive website. This is close to the old show "Green Acres". Please help us to live in the present. **Paula H.**

I live less than 5 miles to the closest town, and only 1 mile to the closest housing development that has high speed internet. I bought the land and built a house 4 years ago because I was told by my phone company DSL was available. After moving in and calling to have them install my DSL line I was told not available. I have a job I could work from home but cannot because of the lack of high speed internet. It's time our tax dollars are put to work to do some good and honor the promises that were made by our President to bring broadband to rural areas. **Todd L.**

Being in a rural area with 2 teenagers using internet is very expensive with the limited gigabytes provided by satellite and mobile phone companies. my expenses are 250.00 monthly for these services and i feel we in rural areas deserve better. **Michael C.**

I run a small business from my home but living in a rural area, have spent more time than necessary with internet speed issues. I live on a gravel road and spend what I consider to be a huge amount of money just to have an internet speed where I can work productively. Over the past 8 years I have changed services 3X but still have issues. I am amazed at how fast my children and friends are able to communicate (they obviously live in a city). If there are monies to be shared for such an endeavor, why are we giving our tax money to foreign governments before taking care of our own? **Jane D.**

As a rural American citizen our choice for internet service has been satellite internet which is equivalent to old dial-up internet. It is not conducive to student studies, work from home, or recreational uses such as streaming TV, movies, or music. It is slow and cumbersome. Recently we were allowed DSL through the telecommunications company in our area. Due to the demand for high speed internet access in rural areas this DSL service is less than ideal. It gets overloaded with excessive users and slows to a crawl or ceases to work all together at least once a day. It gets extremely frustrating to try and complete any task requiring internet access. Broadband from electric providers would be greatly desired in rural America. How are we supposed to keep up with 'changing times' when we lack access to current technology? Please help facilitate broadband policy changes. Thank you. **Aimee M.**

Just north of Mattawan, MI, we had no broadband available whatsoever (excluding satellite, which doesn't really count due to its horrible performance) until 2010. Verizon was trying to dump their landlines and had no interest in serving this area. We would drive 20 miles round trip to my wife's place of work for the kids to download large homework packages, and in general to have a good internet connection vs. the dial-up we had at home. We now have a local WIMAX ISP which works well, but we are limited to 3mbps, and pay about double what internet in an urban area costs. But we consider ourselves lucky to have it; many can't due to distance or line of sight obstructions to the tower. Wireless LTE service isn't really viable either, due to heavy capping and high cost. 3mbps is barely broadband nowadays; fiber to the home is a pipe dream in this area. Our family went on a Mediterranean cruise in 2010, and we were amazed at how much better the internet service was there, even on remote islands. That really made us realize how quickly the US is falling behind even 2nd world countries technologically. **Dean P.**

I currently do not have access to rural broadband. Because it's not "profitable" for our previous internet company, I was forced to switch to satellite internet service. My kids need internet access for school projects and homework and my husband needs it for his business. We only have a limited amount of internet access based on our data usage. We are not able to use our internet as freely as before because the data is used up so rapidly and we are charged exhorbitant fees to obtain small amounts of additional data. Rural broadband could be better if we all had access to it!! **Toni C.**

I'm lucky where I live. I'm fortunate enough to have DSL available (We're the last house on the line). DSL is just barely tolerable in this day and age, but losing feasibility quickly. I am the Technology Director for Paw Paw Public Schools and it is our students who are missing out the most! They are being left behind, because that don't have decent, if any Internet bandwidth making it to their homes. If we're going to support our Governor's Any Time, Any Place, Any Pace learning initiative, this should be the States biggest investment in our future! I vote a strong YES for Fiber to the home! **Joseph N.**

Experiencing urban broadband at my brother's is such a delight compared to what we in the country must pay and experience. In the rural areas we are limited to satellite providers. This puts us at the mercy of the weather to say nothing of limited providers. When we have snow or heavy rain or high winds or any such weather, our access ends. Satellite transmission cannot penetrate severe weather. Small businesses and farms are thus at the mercy of weather not only for transportation, service providers for their business and customer accessibility - but now without broadband we lack connection to the rest of the world. This is only the adult side. On the youth side, they are denied access to what they need for their future to compete with urban students and students around the world. Lack of broadband in rural communities doesn't give my wife's students what is necessary on a 24/7/365 for homework and college entrance. **Curt J.**

I live only 50 miles from the Detroit metro airport. Yet I often feel that I live in the middle of nowhere. Our internet access sucks. Over the years I've used satellite, cell phone, and local dial up. All have their downfalls, mainly they are not broadband. The speeds and data limitations are very restrictive. Recently our local ISP installed a wireless access tower near our location. At first it was great. But alas, after a few weeks they had overloaded that tower to the point that during prime time we might as well use dial up. As I see it, our main problem is the lack of competition in provided true broadband access. Anything that can be done to improve competition will pay off greatly for us. Although we only live 7 miles from the nearest town that has high speed fiber access, we might as well live in the middle of a remote desert. Rural American like me need the same access to quality and affordable broadband access that our urban (and non-urban) neighbors have. Please allow FCC policy to foster as much competition as possible in providing service to rural America. Thank you. **Bob U.**

The internet has become a necessary part of our lives with banking, mail, news and important information all becoming digital. Living in a rural area has become a challenge as we attempt to keep up with the rest of the world using slow, low bandwidth internet service. Our present expensive, low bandwidth, and some times high latency service is very frustrating when you are trying to get you work done. I can only imagine what our students are going through trying to complete homework and college assignments in our present situation. Our country needs to address the problem and provide the internet to all similar to the rural electrification used in past years. **Pat C.**

at the moment i have broadband internet through a satellite provider. even though it is adequately fast it is limited to bandwidth used. right now i pay \$50+ for 10Gb of bandwidth per month. in a household of 2 adults and 5 school age children, we typically use up our 10Gb within 1-2 weeks. after our bandwidth is used for the month our speed is reduced to about dialup speeds. this is so frustrating. if money is available for internet growth into the rural areas then it needs to be spread to those companies that will use it for that. the phone companies (or cable companies) dont appear to be interested in branching out into the rural areas, but my electric company is. Thank you. **Vern S.**

We have tried several methods and internet providers over the years in a attempt to speed up our connection with limited success. We still experience lost connections which makes it very hard to do some online activities let alone use it for any streaming activity. We rely on the internet to receive information for the volunteer activities we are active in. I'm a County Road Commissioner and we both volunteer at the the Council on Aging were among other things my wife headed the free tax preparation program for seniors in Cass County. We really need reliable and affordable high speed internet access, which we do not have now. **Thomas C.**

I'm STILL waiting! Bring me into the 21st Century please. I'm feeling like a 3rd World country here. No 4G service even! That would take a small dent off it! **James L.**

Telephone companies do not provide true broadband service in our area but they are willing to partner with satellite companies. How about this service being provided for a reasonable price? I like the idea that my electric service provider is willing to bring broadband to its market. **Wes G.**

Reliable and affordable access to the internet is essential today - for everyone. While it is commendable to strive for computer **access** for school children in cities, there are millions of folks in rural America, including businesses, farmers, ranchers, educators and the disabled who are without 21st century access. Legislators who work to correct this inequitable situation will be rewarded for their efforts. You were elected to speak for us and to address our needs: we expect you to do so. **Amos M.**

For the past six years I've worked really hard to earn the priviledg of being a work at home associate for a local financial institution. With the high cost of fuel and the wage I earn in Michigan, work at home has helped make it possible for me to manage my finances. At the age of 58 I've finally realized my dream of my own rural property. My five year goal is to start a small agricultural business that will help provide for my retirement. However, since rural properties seldom have broadband internet service, and mine is no exception, I will no longer to be able to work from home. This is going to cause a 60 mile round trip commute every day. The money I will now have to spend in gas will take away substantially from the budget I have to grow my business. Also, this will take approximately two hours each day from the time I will have to spend on taking care of the farm. That's ten hours a week. Time that could be so well spent doing things to help fulfill my business goals. Once my business is running my sales will be generated primarily by internet sales and advertising. The cost of doing this via satellite will be well over the amount I can afford. I have a younger brother who was planning on living with me to help me get things established around the farm. However, he is a student and could not afford to commute for his classes. He is in a program that offers the majority of classes online but with no broadband or high speed internet that will not be possible either. You see so many ads and you hear so much talk about farming being the backbone of our country. There is a real demand for organic produce and a green earth. Small farms vanished in this country for economic reasons, not for the lack of love for that way of life. Drive through the country side and look at the abandoned and unused properties. Rural life needs to become a reality again and not just the dream of that lifestyle. I've worked hard to see this dream become a reality and I deserve the same support you've given to the urban communities around me. If the FCC has funds that are supposed to be used for rural development, I beg you to urge them to do the right thing and distribute the funds to companies that are willing to provide that service.

**Debra N.**

The only way my family and i can receive internet service is by using a satellite dish, leaving our service to the whims of fickle mother nature. Our home is situated more than 300 feet from the road, too far for standard cable service to be reliable due to signal drop, and the local cable company refuses to run lines although the electric service lines come to the house, these could be used for a broadband line. And additionally, by running this line to us they would also pick up more customers simply because we are the last customer on the electric service line.

**Susan T.**

For years all we had was dial-up, which was not only slow, but also tied up the phone line. Now we have only one option which is expensive, and many people still have no options at all. We need competition to keep the price down and provide incentive to providers to give better service. **Robert W.**

Living in the country, there's not a lot of broadband options. We deserve to have the same experience with broadband as they do in big cities!! **Jena B.**

At this point "satellite" is the only thing available in my area! **Robert A.**

Yes, it will reach people that can't get broadband in their areas, and it will also help bring down the high cost of the company's that do offer it. If you can get broadband you pay their cost or do without. **Barbara W.**

I currently do NOT have broadband access because the few choices available to me do not work for me. Thank you. **Steve R.**

The only internet connection we can get is either dial up, or HughesNet. Dial up is too slow to complete many of my business transactions, and HughesNet is dreadfully expensive. **Wednesday P.**

The only source of high speed internet service in my area is Comcast which is cost prohibitive for most of my neighbors. A low cost service would be a very welcome service to our neighborhood. **Paul H.**

My broadband provider has a service that averages < 1.1 Mbps, I live within 2 miles of town but due to the fact I'm 1200 feet from the road the faster providers want to charge a prohibited cost. I work with computers often and could use a faster more reliable service. It's a sad case when the guy next door is running at 12 Mbps for a less money than me. **Ron S.**

We are limited to only one internet provider. Which is Comcast which is great but my family that lives less than 2 miles away has to have satellite internet that is 3 times what I pay. **Dominic C.**

I am at the mercy of 1 broadband provider. Frontier. We need competition in the rural areas. **Cleo W.**

We live just north of Mattawan, MI and one mile west of the Kalamazoo county/Van Buren county line. We have only one option for internet service, a rather slow DSL provided by Frontier.com. We pay as much or more than citizens in Kalamazoo for an outdated slow service which can not watch streaming videos without it stopping and starting continuously. I would hope broadband would provide better service at lower cost. **John H.**

We have had many attempts in the past at having reliable broadband service here at our house. We recently have received better service from Frontier Communications but are still at a little speed of 3.1 or less. A higher speed would most definitely benefit as we experience heavy loads that many times makes the speed even lower. **Garvel O.**

Broadband to be really available to all will require extending fiber optic cable to every home in America which is actually a reasonable goal. My present system can go out at anytime and must be reset. **David S.**

I'm getting tired of paying at times 50% more than people in town or large metro areas for internet that is slow and at times even block out completely. **Steven G.**

Our fastest speed is 1 MB through phone company. The phone company offers a second line with 1mb of service to split devices amount the two. But that means you would pay nearly \$40.00 a month! We chose just one line. **Cathy G.**

I recently moved to Addison, MI. Having come from the Ann Arbor area, I was disappointed to learn that my internet options were limited. I chose, among few options, to purchase a Hot Spot for my internet needs. My preference would have been to have high speed internet similar to what I was previously accustom to. Please take steps to make internet, broadband access more widely available. **Joelle M.**

The only way to get internet is like \$90 dollars a month and that is with a dish or a hot spot cell phone set up. You have to pay more if you use it to much and is not as fast as cable. If you live in a city or larger town you get speed and only pay \$30 or less with almost no limits on how much you use it. So rural broadband could be much better. We had high hopes for thru the electric lines, but that did not work out. Why is it that we are so far behind most of the world on internet access? **Dennis B.**

Yes it could and should be done. It would help to keep prices in line for these services and it is very much needed in the rural areas. **David L.**

Our mobile hot spot is much better than dial up. But, it is no where near as fast as wifi in urban areas--hotels, restaurants, etc. It is a real shame to have to leave home to get good internet. I understand that many other countries not only have better internet access than ours, but better rates. **Barbara H.**

I'm interested in Rural broadband and don't understand why it isn't already available. Currently my options are very limited and without competition the price gouging is a common yet frustrating experience. Currently Comcast is aware I have no other option and charge me \$90 per month for just internet. In addition to this price, they lack the motivation to provide me with quality customer service. No more delays. **John J.**

I have searched many options for broadband in the north watervliet area. We have few options available except a wireless hot spot or satellite system that is expensive and weather dependent. Please request the FCC to use the money available for broadband in our rural areas. **Joseph F.**

We live in a very rural area and are offered extremely limited choices for braodband. The service we do have is intermintent at best. We deal with this on a daily basis since we run a business out of our home and internet usage is extensive. Reliable, fast service is desperately needed in the rural areas. **Deanne L.**

Rural America needs broadband! The internet should be available to anyone with a means to access it! Please, give companies who are dedicated to getting broadband to rural areas, access to the allocated funds. **Barbara W.**

Our choices for broadband coverage are pretty much limited to phone and cable/satellite company programs which are overly expensive and, in the case of dsl, too slow. This area needs more competition and connecrions which are more generally reliable. **Richard P.**

Slow DSL is the best available to me at the moment. **Tim L.**

Education is most important in our home. Having five children attend school in this high tech world is difficult without broadband. I strive to nurture my children's education but because their school curriculum depends so greatly on modern technology it's often difficult without adequate internet access. As I support my children's educations, I am also continuing higher education in graduate school. The extra time and great monetary expense that is spent without broadband availability is great. Often I find myself having to travel to libraries or work that has broadband access in order to do simple tasks that are required for normal school and household responsibilities. Please consider providing broadband services to rural areas. Our children's education should be top priority and having broadband will support their educational needs. **Amanda R.**

I only have access to DSL of a speed of 1mbps my only other option is Cell Service at an over priced rate charged by data used or expensive satellite. Please use the CAF funds to help expand internet to our area. **Jeremy C.**

Rural broadband is a major necessity, that had be ignored for many years. This will benefit the way we live life in 21 Century, and move forward out of the 1980's. Families and children that are attending school would finally have the same benefit and need that urban families have. **Julian S.**

Living an the Covert, MI area just outside of the main part of town. I am also just outside of the broadband area for Frontier phone service as well as the local cable company. Leaving the only way to get high speed internet as Wild Blue which is very expensive. My wife sometimes has to work from home as she works for Whirlpool Corp. but even with Wild Blue sometimes has trouble logging in because the speed is still slower then either DSL of Cable. I would like to open a online business but don't have access to broadband speeds that make it possible. In short the people in rural areas of America need help to get access to broadband. **Roger W., Sr.**

The only internet service that is available to our location at a reasonable price is a cellular "hotspot" through my cell phone provider. It's faster than dial up but isn't comparable to what people have available in more populated areas. Additionally, we are limited by affordability concerning how much data we can access. My husband and I both have home offices for our businesses and we could certainly use better internet access. Our landline telephone provider, Frontier, provides internet service but it stops 1 mile from our home and it appears they have no interest in bringing that to the rest of my neighborhood. **Marilyn C.**

When I contacted Comcast asking for cable to our house they sent an engineer to find us. We are only about three miles from their nearest cable location. There are some six families that live on our road and all of them would sign up. But Comcast told us it would cost them "hundreds of thousands of dollars" to get to our area. So they said "no". We have invested our own money to get wireless broadband including an 80ft tower and all the trappings that go with it. If our electric cooperative could get fiber to our house, we would have much greater speed and possibly better service. It could also alleviate our exposure to lightning strikes. **John B.**

We currently have satellite broadband internet at our residence. It is slow and has a significant data limit. This means we can only access desired information for a certain amount of time without paying significantly more than our already high payment for a mediocre service. This is our ONLY option for broadband internet where we live. **Nathaniel K.**

I have very few options where I live. I do not have Internet right now because of the lack of broadband availability. **Ryan R.**

As someone who lives in a rural community and cannot get broadband service, I have been severely limited in how I can grow my business. It's unfortunate that in 2014, the US still have so many areas around the country that don't have adequate broadband service. This affects business, education, and the development of many people. Please do what you can to improve this. Thank you. **Michael C.**

We currently only have access to dial up or expensive very limited unreliable satellite internet. I have been on the phone with them many times trying to get them to resolve the issue. this is very upsetting when I can not do simple tractions remote connecting into my business servers. My daughters take online classes while they are home for the summer from college and with not having reliable, adequate broadband speeds this creates stressful conditions. **Joel G.**

I started with dial up and had to go to satillite..wild blue, hughes net. It goes out in bad weather and is still slow for way to much money. I'm on disability and am very limited for cash. This would help me a lot. If I have to stay in all the time, good internet would help a lot. I live on a dirt road so there is no broadband here. Please help. **Juanita S.**

To answer the question, most definately. It is nearly impossible for me to work-from-home (tele-commute) when I have the option available to me. It is impossible to have a reliable computer-based/monitored home security system with cameras. **Kevin R.**

Comcast is the only Internet service available to the area where I live, and the current rate for Internet ONLY is \$75/month. Even the local phone service does not serve this area. This cost is outrageous! **Philip V.**

Having lived in a city of several hundred thousand, and taught at universities and colleges for twenty years, I took for granted that what I knew as internet accessibility at reasonable prices existed everywhere. Therefore I assumed I would have equal quality service at equally reasonable prices. I could not have been more wrong. When I first moved back to rural Michigan the only available internet access was dial-up, which was primitive beyond belief, given the state of access in even small cities. Now, several years later, broadband exists, but requires a home phone account, and costs 2.5 times as much as it should. The other alternative in my area is satellite "high speed", which only allocates a small amount of access each month at a reasonable download speed--which it does not let customers know ahead of time--then when that limit is reached it reduces access speed to dial-up once more. I believe they are afraid to give folks real high speed because they also sell television access, and they think customers will opt for internet-based entertainment (like Netflix or Hulu, for example) if given the option because it's much less expensive and more expansive. All options in my area are unreasonable expensive, particularly for people living on fixed incomes who rely on internet access to connect to the world. We are allowed to be exploited, it is as simple as that. **Brenda W.**

Most of the time we can't get a phone signal at our summer home in Vandalia, MI. We desperately need broadband in our area. **Rosenwald A., Jr.**

Internet is slow and very unreliable; aside from entertainment purposes, we both do a lot of work from home and trying to maintain and update websites, lesson plans, and do our marketing is challenging when our connection is so poor and there is only one provider. **Elizabeth R.**

I recently moved into a small 15 home sub-division outside Dowagiac, MI in Pokagon Township. All attempts to find high-speed broadband service in this rural community have proven futile. Comcast has service at the highway but had not built any infrastructure in our sub-division when it was developed. I engaged them after moving in and they simply refused to price what it would cost to provide service. They were uninterested and told me to check back in 2 years. Frontier is the DSL provider in this area but our sub-division is quite far from the central office. The service provided by Frontier has been incredibly slow and does not provide sufficient bandwidth for two people to use the internet at the same time without delays. The only way to upgrade Frontier's service is by purchasing their business class Metro-E solution which will cost over \$525/month for 10Mbps. It is simply unaffordable. Both myself and my wife often work from home. Quality broadband internet service is crucial to us. **Satellite internet's inherent latency would make remoteness to the office near impossible.** Also, wireless services provided by AT&T and Verizon are spotty in this area. While we have seen some upgrades to "4G", real LTE service may still be years away. We are about to have our first child and I fear if the situation does not improve, he will be at a great disadvantage compared to his classmates living in town where true high-speed internet is available. This \$1.8 billion can go a long way in the hands of companies willing to use it for the benefit of families like mine. Midwest Energy Cooperative realizes that making this investment in rural communities is worthwhile. **Dustin R.**

I know rural areas are the last to jump on the Train of Progress. We are too busy in our old ways to "toot our own horn." That being said, computers and internet service are being implemented in our schools, and our homes need to be able to support our students and teachers. What student will pick up a dictionary or encyclopedia at home, once they have used Google or Wikipedia? Those who run a business from home, save phone money by using email. Down time is money lost, which slows the rural economy. In 1986, we lost phone service every time a heavy truck went past our home. By the end of that decade, phone lines were buried and we had reliable service. During the 90s we were put on a public sewer line, and some opted for city water. The late 90s also saw the introduction of technology, school computers, affordable cell phones, and personal computers. By 2010, WIFI was in many businesses and homes. That is roughly 30 years of Progress! I realize we are in somewhat of a Depression, but wouldn't modernizing our rural areas, be similar to Roosevelt's New Deal and put people back to work? **Beverly A.**

Yes, it would be better. **I pay \$99 a month for satellite and it is still slow. It is needed for school work and it is difficult for our children to use internet for that purpose.** **Elizabeth De L.**

Rural broadband has a long ways to go. **My family currently has to rely on satellite for our broadband. It is nothing like what our DSL line was when we lived in town.** The DSL was always on never slowed down and there was no cap to worry about. **Now if we reach our cap, which is easy to do with 6 kids, a wife, and myself, our service drops speed to almost dial up. You can't watch youtube videos and forget about streaming anything. If you are doing anything like online schooling you will have a challenge getting it done. We were allowed unlimited data from 12 midnight to around 5 am. Very useful time frame for people who are not up at those hours.** **Arthur D.**

Rural Americans need the same access to quality and affordable broadband that our urban neighbors have. Please demand FCC policy change and allow those who understand the needs of rural America to provide real and meaningful solutions. Thank you. **Richard N.**

**I have no access to internet other than a dish or by phone.** I work as an Independent contractor and am limited by my lack of options for internet. I do not have a hard line telephone line which limits my access please help. **Lynette N.**

We now get our internet access through our telephone lines. It isn't very fast but that is all we have. I think it might be faster connection thru the electric company. Rural America has been paying this broadband tax now we should get some benefit. Please help FCC. Thanking you, **Larry & Muriel P.**

I live in an area that has access to broadband through one carrier only. To make it worse my exact location is a dead zone. I have had dial-up on and off for several years, and now for the last 5 years, I have had nothing. The only service that I can get is on my tablet through my cell phone carrier. I can't print, and can only do so much on-line. I can not afford a \$100.00 or more monthly fee for internet service. Real people have house payments, car payments, and utility bills to pay every month. There are cell towers up all over the countryside, and I do not understand why broadband can't do the same. **Shelly B.**

I only have access to the internet from my mobile phone unless I go in to our local library. I cannot print information and it is not cost effective or convenient to travel into town each time I need to do something. **Rural residents' only option is satellite which is very unreliable and unattractive to property.** All people have the right to the internet and residents should be able to have rural broadband and not forced to use very limited options. **Susan O.**

The only internet connection I can purchase affordably is thru Comcast. I have it bundled with my cable TV. In March, I called Comcast about dropping the cable TV portion of my services and only having internet connection.....I was floored when they told me that my bill would drop from the \$120.00 I'm paying now to \$80.00 just for internet access! That's before the taxes, fees, etc are tacked on!!! That is still roughly \$1,000.00 per year just for internet!!! So basically, I'm paying double the amount for internet access versus an entire package of TV stations (most of which I don't watch which is why I AM going to drop them when I find an alternative source). I am a single, hard-working older gal (yes, a taxpayer). I deserve the same access to affordable, reliable, high speed internet! **Julie L.**

Broadband is not currently available where I live. **I have internet through a satellite service which is not as fast as broadband and is affected by weather.** I would love to have broadband access where I live. I truly am not in that rural of an area. Broadband is available within a mile of my home. **Carol G-M.**

Our previous broadband service was SO slow yet sold to us as being "high speed" AND the costs per month continued to go up - we cancelled our service!!! **David B.**

Rural broadband can be better than what I am currently experiencing. **Jennifer G.**

**I have suffered though dialup, cell phone, and satellite for internet access.** I work from my home 100% of the time and I need reliable internet without download restrictions. There are several applications that could make my work more efficient but I cannot use them because they transmit too much data and I either get cut off before the end of the month or pay \$150 in additional data fees per month. I am tired of paying \$80 to \$230 per month and still not be able to fully benefit due to the data restrictions. **Martin M.**

Rural users are just as entitled to broadband access as those who live in more densely populated areas. They don't have as many voices to request or demand it, and so they VOTE for representation in the legislature that they think will help them. If this help is denied them, they have no further recourse. What's wrong with this picture??? It's obvious. **Ruth M.**

My business is crippled by lack of access to high speed internet. Currently, I pay \$300+/month for verizon cellular internet, which is slow, throttled, subject to high overage charges and doesn't work well with various weather conditions such as fog and rain. Even when paying \$300+/month, Verizon still cuts off my access near the end of the month due to my account being used too heavily. As a software engineer, I've researched various methods of bringing high speed internet into my rural area, including microwave towers, laser uplinks, RF based radios, fiber lines and satellite internet. None of these options work without a significant investment into the infrastructure. I am left at the mercy of the only internet provider available in my area, Verizon. However, their service is designed for occasional internet usage and not businesses. Rural America needs access to high speed internet. **Luc L.**

I would love to have broadband, then I can eliminate the need of a land line for my internet and strictly use my cell phone. this elimination would save me money. **Sharon D.**

Please implement policy changes in FCC to allow other providers for high speed internet services other than the current communication providers. This would increase competition for customers in rural areas, better rates, and internet services in poorly Covered areas in rural America. **Mary S.**

We moved from Holland to Howard City last summer. In Holland we enjoyed Charter Cable internet. Where we live in Howard City we are not serviced by cell phone tower, dsl, Casair (local county supported internet) or cable. Our only internet option is Satellite and this is extremely expensive for 15 gig a month we pay \$95 at month. Please fund another option(s) for internet service. **John G.**

In 2010 I purchased my home in Mattawan MI from my wife's family who was facing foreclosure since they could not sell their home. It may have taken me years to buy one otherwise, so I am able to provide a stable home now for my children. The one regret about this home is that there is no high speed internet. I am concerned now about when my children are going to school, if they will be able to remain competitive with other children who have internet. 20 years ago things were different, but today we need internet access. Everything is moving to be download-only and the world expects that you have internet. **Matthew B.**

We have broadband through Frontier Communications on our phone line, but the connection is inadequate because the hub between Three Rivers and Muskegon is often jammed due to overloading. We often cannot get on the internet as a result. **Robert E.**

I currently have to use my cell phone for access to my internet/email or pay extremely high monthly fees for poor internet access. **Wendy R.**

Satellite internet sucks. Give us rural broadband! **Justin L.**

Since TV is headed towards only being available online, everyone needs equal access to affordable and reliable high speed internet. **Kyla L.**

To Whomever It May Concern, We live on a rural, heavily traveled road 5 miles outside of Schoolcraft, MI. It's a main thoroughfare and only 20 minutes from Portage. Until last year, we were unable to get broadband at our home. At that time Verizon finally extended service here. As far as the main providers, they are the only one that finally helped. It seemed unbelievable that in 2012, there was no service at this level being provided. There are a multitude of homes in this area, so it is not just farmland. We expressed our frustration many times to the major providers and they had no answers for us for many years. My husband works out of our home, as do I. It was a huge inconvenience to not be able to access the internet at a reasonable speed! So much so that we seriously considered moving. I fully support Midwest Energy's request to be able to access these funds. They really care about serving the rural population and have been in constant communication with us as to their progress. No other provider even cared to keep us informed. Please seriously consider their request! It is ridiculous in this day and age that in the United States, anyone is left out of what has now become an absolute necessity. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, **Suzanne R.**

Given this day and age that we live in the internet in our rural community is non-existent. Any option that you have to offer would be immensely appreciated. **John W.**

I have been waiting since 2003 for an acceptable & affordable internet option. I live in an area just a couple of miles beyond the reach of the local DSL lines, no cable and no cell signal. I also have many family members and friends that live in my immediate area -we are forced to pay very high prices for unreliable and limited usage satellite internet. I have been waiting since 2003 for an acceptable & affordable internet option. Furthermore the area is wooded so our satellite dish has to be on top of our house, imagine the frustration during snowy winter months when accumulations of snow block our signal! This is Michigan, it is going to snow and quite often a LOT! Removing the snow is very dangerous on a peaked roof especially in a Michigan winter! People that live in a rural area have the same needs as those living within or near city limits, it's time to start giving something back to the ones who have been waiting for so long! **Brandy F.**

I am being robbed by the so called high speed dish internet--most of the time it reminds me of internet of the early nineties where you try to download or upload information and you need to leave your computer for 10 to 15 minutes and still find it not completing the task. Hughes net is the biggest rip off --they promised low cost for five years and quickly raise our rates to \$80.00 a month. When I complained they claim they don't recall promising the low rate--suddenly the person you dealt with is no longer with the company. **Gerold T.**

The small phone co. here charges about twice what people pay in larger cities where there is competition. **Lyndon S.**

I am being held captive because of the fact that I have to get the Internet via a broadband "air" service which is outrageously expensive for the amount of data I receive. Please help me. **Lynn C.**

In 2007, we moved from a home in a small town where we had broadband internet, three miles away, into the township. There is no broadband to be seen. We tried satellite, but it is expensive and not reliable in bad weather and we run a business out of our home and even though we had the highest level, we sometimes got slowed down and even stopped, because of download limits. Our downloads consist of business related things, not from youtube or movies. We have since gone to wireless from the house to a wireless receiver DSL. We are paying for the fastest speed but are slowed way down on weekends or snow days or when the kids get home from school. It is very difficult on some days to get much done in our business. Three miles makes a big difference for our internet experience. **Evelyn P.**

We have no access to high speed internet where we live, our current internet comes in from the phone line and very slow, I think we need to get rural america up to speed. **Bob F. Tax PAYER**

I don't have access to Broadband, and have never had it. I used to work at the Upjohn Company, installing, trouble shooting, and moving Personal computers, so I know how fast computers can be, but I have never had a fast computer at my house, because fast connections are not available. I do agree that high speed connections are almost a necessity, and if available, I would probably have one, if I could afford one. Thanks for listening to my thoughts, **Raymond J.**

We can't get it here! Enough said. I pay alot for Xfinity! **Larry D.**

Living in rural cassopolis michigan, I have only 4 options for internet access. 1 is dialup from the incumbent telecom, Frontier. This service is offered on antiquated copper network, with speeds no greater than around 14 Kb.- unacceptable , & barely even use able. Option 2 is cellular internet With so many different providers & tower owners, it makes it inconsistent to maintain connectivity, as each tower maintains different technology, & lack of sufficient towers and spacing distances. **Option 3 is satellite internet, which is what I am currently using. It is great, hands down the best option I have at this point. Too bad its pricey and unreliable when the weather is bad ( cloudy,rainy).** Option 4 is the trial FTTP that Midwest is placing in my neighborhood. Finally someone who has stepped up to the plate to actually do something to upgrade their customers! I work for an incumbent telecom in Indiana, & the business model is based on utilizing the last few miles of copper, & is driven by cost per living unit. This barely serves customers in the metro areas, let alone the forgotten customers who live outside the city limits. For reliable, affordable broadband, fiber infrastructure is the only viable option for The future of oncoming technologies.; therefore we need this service to be connected now and later. **Eric R.**

Right now I have no option on my internet provider. The rates continue to climb and the service continues to decline. I should have an option on my provider choice rather than just be told if I want service, this is it. **Kathleen F.**

There is nothing for us in the coutry . No bars, for signals, if you do find a service it costs alot of money, plus a 3 ear contract. If something should come along that you would like to try you have this binding contract holding you back. If you drop them you get a big fine out of it. I am so tired of not being able to find the fast and dependable internet connection! Thank you for trying to help us. **Marlene M.**

**Satellite is terrible and actually unusable for certain types of Internet applications.** ADSL speeds are based on distance from Telephone Central Office so very slow for most rural locations. It ends up being very expensive per megabit/second. Cable is great but I had to spend almost \$2k getting from "the pole" to my house. Cable is my only true high-speed option and there is no choice of cable companies because of the bogus monopolies doled out by municipalities. There is only one phone company and it won't do optical fiber probably EVER in this area. There is no WiMax service. Cable is my only real high speed internet option. **John B.**

We have internet through our phone line however it is still slow. We really could use a faster & more reliable internet. We run a business and it would be nice to be caught up with the rest of thr world. I am always explaining to customers sorry we are in the country and it's just still slow out here. **Nancy G.**

We struggled to get service and when we did it is slow and intermittent. Because of the lack of tax base in our area there are few choices for service and it is cumbersome to maintain and expensive. **Jeff M.**

Broadband...try living in an area with limited to no broadband available. We are living in an area which currently has access to dial up only internet. As dial up is impossible to use in this present technology based society, we are often left without options. I am currently writing this from my work computer as I have no other method to get my email than through internet access at work. Further the area we live in is unable to access a satellite signal without erecting our own tower at an expense of more than \$3,000. Obviously for a family residence, this cost can not be justified. My children have frequently had to spend time at the library computer centers (when available) or utilize my husbands or my workplace to complete school projects. They even attempt to complete them using a smart phone which is not cost effective or practical. We are even in an area where using a smart phone as a "hot spot" is not an option. The school naturally assumes everyone has internet access and require many of their assignments be completed via the internet. Where we are located is like living in the stone ages. We could definitely benefit from a service offered by our electric cooperative. The required fees we have paid in relation to technology and our utility bills entitles us to the same access as our urban counterparts. **Sandra F.**

It has been a real hindrance to our family not having broadband for MANY reasons. Like many people, I work from home and after using Dial-up until 2007 I changed to satellite based internet. That was so expensive and unreliable I changed to a mobile hot spot about 3 years ago. Unfortunately, that, too, has been expensive and unreliable. We have a deaf teenage daughter who attends a residential school 4 hours away. There is a video phone program that would allow her to contact us [she uses ASL and lipreading to communicate] when she is at school and to contact her friends when she is at home. Since we cannot get high speed internet, she cannot use this and she is forced to try to email and text. This makes communication extremely difficult for her because of her English delays. Next, my husband is working on his degree online. More than once in the last 4 months we've had such bad internet connections that papers were late--even when he had them done DAYS early--because we couldn't get a strong enough signal to upload his assignments at the University's website. The pages took so long to load they timed out before the page was loaded--let alone the papers uploaded. We have to drive in to town to try to get to the library to turn in assignments. During one of the blizzards this year we were snowed in and we couldn't get the internet to load after hours of trying. We tried using our phones as mobile hot spots too. We tried to think of a fast food restaurant or other place where he could take his laptop. Finally, at 11:30pm [when the paper was due before midnight] the page loaded and he completed his assignment. This fall our oldest daughter will begin to study for the PSATs. There are no local Kaplan classes which means they will need to be done online. She cannot attend the online classes because our internet isn't fast enough for the video feed. She has to take prerecorded classes so she can let the computer load for hours. The course includes a live course as part of the cost--so she will be missing out and we will pay for something we cannot use. While we realize it will still take a few years for broadband should these funds be released, at least change will be on the horizon. We are 1/4 mile WEST from DSL, but we live on a county line...so we cannot get the DSL from across the county line. We're 3 miles NORTH of DSL, but that is a state line. We are 5 miles EAST of high speed internet, but it doesn't extend from that town to us. In 21st century America with these funds--as well as so many others--being forcefully taken from us, it is about time all of us get to benefit by using the most efficient--not the most entrenched--means. **Tiffany C.**

Right now we have dsl and have found it to be tempermental. We are thinking about switching to broadband. **James S.**

At this time i already experience internet service through my phone service but i would entertain the idea having Midwest Energy serve my internet needs Thank you for the fight to give us the right. **Paul K.**

Rural broadband will help many people achieve much more. My children often stay an extra night at their moms house so that they may use her broadband for school projects. My two youngest sons are both in the Niles New tech school, all of their work is on a Macbook with much of it done on the Internet. My fiancé is a nurse halfway through her masters degree to become a nurse practitioner. Her school is Graceland university and the majority of her class work and projects are online. **I am an insurance agent and speed of our dish based Internet won't support the websites I need.** This creates the situation of needing to go to work early and stay late in order to better serve my insured's and cuts in to spending less time at home with my family affecting our overall quality of life. Regardless of how far we live out in rural areas we s have the need to keep up with technology. Thank you very much for supporting a plan to increase the availability to acquire broadband internet in rural ares. **Phillip M.**

Yes, I have broadband. But I don't have choice. I believe the foundation of a free market is competition. The telecons are not competing for my business. They are simply dividing up territory. I believe that broadband through an outlet such as Midwest Energy is the only way to bring competition to my area and give me the choice I need to actually be a customer and not a number. **John R.**

We currently have frontier and honestly dial up would probably be faster. We can't get any better internet and broadband would be wonderful. **We have tried to get dish satellite and were told that it isn't available in our area.** I truly think that Midwest broadband would be superb for our area. **Nicole B.**

My husband and I live in a rural area, not accessible to broadband and out of range for consistent, high speed wireless. **We have tried satellite, but the expense was not worth the inconsistent internet service.** As a result, we have to settle for intermittent wireless service. Having another option (affordable) would be great. **Jennifer F.**

There are limited options for fast internet access in rural areas. After moving from the city to the "country", it is very disappointing to be forced to settle for internet access that is slow. **Laura F.**

Rural America needs to be connected to the world. **Anita D.**

I have spent years and a lot of money trying to resolve the issue of not having adequate internet access at our home. As my wife and I both work in the Information Technology field from home offices, decent connectivity is essential for our livelihood. **We've tried satellite, cell-phone "air cards", and of course dial-up. All of these were grossly inadequate.** We have no cable access in our area despite my pleas. When our telephone company Verizon sold out to Frontier, the new company (finally) allowed us to try their DSL internet connection, despite the fact that we are too far from their nearest switch station for it to work optimally (which is why Verizon wouldn't even try). While this works better than the aforementioned options, we still are restricted in bandwidth. This is a VERY SERIOUS ISSUE that needs to be addressed. In this day and age, even the government is assuming everyone has internet access. Obamacare is a website. eFiling tax returns. Everyone with access assumes it is universal, when it is not. Please do something about this! **Curt I.**

Broadband options in rural Michigan are limited, and those available are much less desirable than in more populated areas. Using the internet at home is essential for work and education, and we should not be limited when the capability for faster access exists. **Timothy F.**

Stop the monopoly of the cable companies. **Gerald G.**

We do not have access to broadband. The cable and phone companies do not offer it in our community. **Anna Marie A.**

I live in a rural area about 6 miles from the Village of Vicksburg. My current internet service options are my telephone service provider, which means extremely slow dial-up internet, or a satellite-based provider, which has another set of inadequacies. A broadband-over-power line internet service, such as Midwest previously offered on a pilot basis, or better yet a fiber optic line like the rest of the civilized world, would be a significant improvement over either of the present options. However, in my opinion subsidizing either through any of the major telephone service providers, such as AT&T, would be an unwise and inefficient approach to achieving modern rural internet service. Instead, it makes sense to facilitate high-speed internet service through rural electric service providers, which have already demonstrated a strong commitment to efficient and cost-effective electrical service to their customers. **Craig R.**

Dear Legislators, It's important that all residence of Michigan, both urban and rural have equal access to high-speed broadband Internet service. Many areas in Michigan, such as the one I live in, are woefully underserved in the high-speed broadband Internet market. Every home in my neighborhood and countless homes in Michigan's rural communities only have access to slow suboptimal Internet services. It's simply because the big broadband carriers like AT&T and Comcast say we live too far from town and they don't want to invest in new infrastructure to carry a high-speed signal out into rural districts. Our slow internet problems are further complicated by the fact that we only have one choice of providers for broadband Internet service. This leads to the "we gotcha" syndrome where the carrier has little or no incentive to improve service speeds, because there is no competition in the market. So regardless of how much we complain about slow speed, our carrier refuses to invest in new infrastructure because there is no incentive to do so. I call my carrier, Frontier, every few months and ask when they plan to upgrade or expand high-speed Internet service into my neighborhood in Edwardsburg, MI. I get the same answer every time, which is, you live too far out from the city. We cannot provide you with any faster speeds other than "creeper speed" you currently have. Our Internet is so slow it's faster to print out an email message and tie it to a carrier pigeon for delivery! Even at the business I operate in Niles, MI, my only choice for Internet service, AT&T, can only provide 768k of Internet speed, no faster speed is available; Sadly slow to say the least. Comcast, AT&T, and Frontier all refuse to expand high-speed broadband into Michigan's rural areas. What a shame considering Comcast and AT&T are raking in money hand over fist according to their quarterly reports. We very much need the Federal Communications Commission to release portions of the \$1.8 billion CAF fund to co-ops like Midwest Energy Cooperative because they are willing and able to install the infrastructure needed to bring high speed broadband to our homes and businesses. The key word here is WILLING. AT&T, Comcast, and Frontier may be able to do this work, but they are not willing to do so. Don't let that CAF money be wasted by over bloated carriers only interested in serving dense population centers with high-speed broadband. Instead, open those CAF funds up to alternative carriers willing and ready to lay down fiber and provide the high-speed broadband Internet that rural Michigan needs today. **Richard A.**

I have lived in a rural area for over 20 years. Technology has been slow in coming. I currently have DSL through the telephone company. It's not consistently reliable and the response rate for an issue is less than stellar. I've also had satellite internet in the past and that is by far worse and more expensive. I should have access to the same technology as those who choose to live in a more populated area. I should not have to sacrifice my privacy and location for things such as internet technology. **Cindy H.**

Good access to internet has been unavailable in the rural area I live in 20 miles southwest of Kalamazoo. Dial up has been very slow and inconsistent and with the plan discontinuation of land line phones in the next few years, dial up will no longer be available. Wireless and satellite have both been marginal options. Slow response time, stories of how the tower is not working, down time without warning - all contribute to a very poor alternative. I urge you to support Midwest Energy's proposal to provide this service by making the funds for development and deployment available. Hopefully, when the land lines vanish, the alternative will be available, but we must start now. I do community and volunteer work developing presentations and assisting seniors with pc challenges. Good internet is critical to being able to provide this service. Thank you! **Andy T.**

Had BPL service for a short time, til it was no longer available, through Midwest Energy Coop. Tried Dial-up, but, it will not work in this area. Could not even send a e-mail. Finally, had to get Satellite, as nothing else will work here, and that is quite expensive. We very much need Internet service in this area. **Cheryl C.**

We have absolutely no Internet or cable on my side of the street in my neighborhood. the other side of the street is underground but not our side. please implement rural broadband to connect us with the rest of the world, and with emergency communication network services. **Kimberly S.**

My parents live on the same beloved property that I grew up on many years ago, and they have little to no access to broadband internet. There is nothing they can do on their own to improve their situation. We need broadband internet options available to every household in the US where we already supply electricity. **Benjamin B.**

Rural areas deserve the same broadband service as the intercity, please get this moving. **Donna D.**

I currently have broadband internet thru Dish Network. The service is just ok. The speed is a little better than my former internet provider, Wild Blue. Sometimes I can stream short videos if I wait several minutes for a one minute video to load. We like to use the face time feature with phone calls from out of town family members. Many times the connection is too slow for this. The data limits for this service are incredible small in this age. I know I miss out on a lot of the new technology of streaming music and videos because of this data limits. **John G.**

Yes. I live outside the city limits and have limited resources for obtaining an Internet provider without paying outlandish prices. I would be much more productive and able to sustain my part-time out of the home job with better options. **Kelly K.**

Living in a rural area is my ideal, however, I need to have access to the latest technology, oth for my job as an .rn but also as a private citizen. I also don't think that it should cost me hundreds of do,Lars a year to get these services! **Jane S.**

My problem is not with the speed we have, but the cost. we now have exede (satellite) at a cost of \$69 per month, but only 10gb per month. If we could afford it, we would use around 40 gb, mainly because we do not have a pay tv service. that is also too expensive. thank you – **Paul S.**

Yes. Our broadband options are extremely limited and expensive. The monopoly has allowed a product that is low function, slow, and in adequate to conduct normal business. The customer service is terrible and unresponsive since they are the only option. **Ken D.**

I live in Cass County Michigan and do not have access to hi-speed internet. My daughter is a college student and cannot study at home, she is unable to read online journals and ebooks, or view other online content to advance her studies. My family would welcome broadband that we could afford. Your consideration of this important policy change is appreciated! Sincerely, **Lisa S.**

Coming from an urban/suburban area the difference in access was quite stark and difficult to deal with. **The satellite broadband that was our only option was so substandard as to be worthless. Currently our service is often intermittent and speed is poor- downloading can take hours.** Tasks that folks in better served areas take for granted are challenging if not impossible here. As previously mention Internet access and the ability to utilize access efficiently has become a key to our society as a whole, both public and private, personal and business. It simply isn't adequately provided in rural areas. **Kathleen K.**

Rural options are few, slow, unreliable and expensive. We need the same choices our urban counterparts enjoy. **Kristine S.**

The current high speed internet situation in rural areas is unacceptable. It seems that no effort is made to make higher speeds available to us. We NEED internet in our daily lives and dial up like speeds are no longer adequate. We pay the same for our utilities as people two miles away yet we have inferior service. It's time for change. **Heith D.**

**I had to go to a dish, because nothing else is offered where I live unless I want to pay \$5000 to get cable installed here.** I am a senior citizen & there is no way I can afford that. **Herbert P.**

I live in a rural area and there is only one broadband provider. Needless to say...they have the upper hand and can charge what ever they want. This is outrageous, but given the option of not having service or pay the outrageous prices, I have to pay. **Warren A.**

I'm typing this from my cell phone we have no access to decent internet here it is tiresome I really really want to have internet here. **we had satellite it was very very expensive, also it did not work very well now all we have is our cell phone.** we tether it to a computer we have very slow speed and we have problems with the phone company that provides our cellphone service. we have two businesses in the downtown of our town and it is very difficult to work from home when we have no reliable internet connection this does not contribute to the economic well-being of our town. I am typing this on my cell phone this is aggravating! my business will contribute a large amount of tax revenue to our town it is frustrating to come home and not be able to work. I hope you can resolve your differences in provide high speed internet to us we are not that far from the center of our downtown and many other people are suffering from this issue. thank you **Matthew R.**

We live in the country. And need a cheaper faster internet. Why should we go with out to live in peace and quiet. **Joda M.**

Just like cable tv, was nicer, and cheaper when will all had local indie cable companies, I want local provders again, not the monopoly broadband that has been created due to lobbyists. **Therese G.**

I live in a rural area that has limited broadband access and I must go to an urban area miles away to get good internet access. **Randall M.**

Satellite prices and quality are both horrible, I refuse to get it...I'll go without and travel elsewhere to do daughters homework or any other needs. If I had fiber as an affordable option, it would make life easier. **Mischa B.**

The fiber saves us tons of money!! We've tried satellite and it's horrid! If you live in the country, the fiber is the only way to get quality Internet. **Krista C.**

I have tried for 8 years to get a broadband connection. The only options I have for anything faster than dial up is DSL, which is too slow and a 'hot spot' from a cell phone provider. That option is marginally faster, but VERY limited in data usage per month and very expensive. I need to work from home so I can care for my wife, but without an affordable quality broadband connection, it is very difficult. **Stephen R.**

Satellite is expensive and doesn't work well, we love the (Midwest) fiber and for the first time in our rural home we are connected to the world. I would be crushed if we lost our fiber!! **Stacy L.**

Love my (Midwest) fiber! Changed our lives and brought us into the real world! We tried satellite and it was maybe one notch better than dial-up and so worthless. Cancelled it ASAP and had to resort to very, very limited cellular data. I'm so grateful to have fiber and to Midwest for providing it in addition to our electric service! Thank you so much! **Margaret C.**

I am an elected Township Supervisor and I have good broadband service because I live on a main road. However, a large part of the area in our township does not have reliable, affordable coverage. **Joseph E.**

We can't even get a cable company to run a line to our home! (one of the Incumbent providers no doubt, or non-providers in our case). Our neighbor across the street has cable though. It's extremely frustrating. Now, we have to rely upon a wireless internet contracted plan through a cell phone company which is pretty costly. It would be very nice to have fast, and affordable broadband be available through Midwest. **Meloni B.**

We have satellite and it will barely support VPN connectivity to my work. The latency is very high and degrades the internet experience. **Sandy G.**

We only live about 4 miles east of the Village of Vicksburg and we have to use either dial up or a dish for the internet which is crazy, we would like more choices. **Judy T.**

I am a real estate agent that specializes in country properties. Because high speed quality internet service is such an important issue to everyone, my business and the homeowners who want to sell, are significantly and financially impacted by slow or NO internet service. Please do what is right and deserved for the people you represent. **Dawn S.**

We have tried numerous types of internet available to us with little success. They are all very expensive and somewhat slow. We moved to a rural area in Michigan from a suburb of Memphis, TN where broadband was available. When we moved to Michigan, we felt like we went back in time about 10 years due to lack of broadband internet access. Thank you for your support. **Paula H.**

Our current internet access comes via phone lines. If we have a two day rain, we lose internet. If we have high winds, internet becomes so slow as to be useless. I would certainly appreciate a better option. **Deb H.**

The Internet options (or should I say lack of) in my area are unreliable and perform at about dial up speeds. This is the first home I have owned where I have not had access to broadband Internet. Not only do I feel like I live in the stone age, I feel like I can't take advantage energy saving options that come with having your home connected. If I want reliable Internet I have to drive 10 miles to a business that offers free wifi. **Ken T.**

We are moving to a rural area that does not have broadband. In my business I work out of my home. I am in need of a reliable broadband service to keep my business in business. **Ann B.**

Satellite internet is poor quality and very pricey...not to mention the data caps! Jealous of all our friends and family who have "real" internet- they can watch netflix, stream music and videos. Kids got us an Apple TV box for Christmas last year- couldn't use it because of our poor satellite internet connection! Unfortunately, satellite is our only option out here in the country. **Mimi M.**

I'm so happy to hear all these great reviews of fiber. We are the next to get installed this spring and I'm ecstatic! It opens so many doors! Working from home without losing connectivity all the time, streaming video, all the kids working on homework at the same time. I can't wait!!!! **Marci D.**

Due to my living on rural country road, the only thing available to me is Hughes Net which is extremely expensive and my neighbors tell me, not very reliable. **Chandra T.**

We need better signals in rural areas. Please open up broadband to other sources so it can be improved. **Julia B.**

Yes. The only reliable internet at this time where I live. I live in Rural area. It is a witless air cars that uses cell phone towere. I have to pay well over 50.00 month just for this service and only limited to 10 gigabytes of data per month. Not fair and not very fast. It is only one step above old dial up service this should change. End the stereo type that country people are not as advanced as city people. Give us broadband too. Thank you. **Kevin W.**

We had satellite internet and always had to hit reset during rain or snow. The service was slow too. We have 12 grandkids and when they were all here and on their phones... It took forever to download anything! The (Midwest) fiber allows everyone to be on the Internet at the same time, quality is great also. We love having the fiber out here in the boonies where we live. Please continue to support our community in this effort. Thank you! **Bev D.**

Satellite is USELESS. Been there done that. Some days I could barely open an email. Recently had our (Midwest) fiber hooked up. High speed and works flawlessly! Keep up the good work MEC! **Steve W.**

We are limited to one carrier so it's a monopoly and our rates are exorbitant! The service in our area ends at our house so our neighbors don't even have the choice of broadband. **Jenny C.**

Typical corporate american if they can't recoup cost instantly don't do it. That is OK if you are making widgets but not acceptable if offering a service as important as broadband. **Larry W.**

There arnt many options for high speed Internet where we live. It would be so much nicer if other broadband services were available. We have teenagers and this day and age high speed Internet is a must. So I hope more is done to expand broadband. Thank you. **April K.**

Access to broadband is no longer a luxury but rather a necessity for information, education, progress, and safety. Rural residents should be afforded equitable access to the same technologies as other residents. **Therese S.**

Internet is a must for someone that is unemployed to find employment! **Leann P.**

We currently have Frontier. service is spotty at best. not very reliable. we constantly need to reset the server to get access. all the other providers in our area are unaffordable. it would be very nice to have a provider in our area that is reliable and affordable. **Lorraine W.**

Satellite is less reliable and consistent. In increment weather lag and loss of service occurs. Having to work at home and chart as a home health nurse, this has caused an inability to access patient charts when I really need them. I have been greatly anticipating this new fiber service in the hopes that it solves this problem among many others. Hang tough- this is much needed advanced technology that a lot of my friends have been anxious for as well. **LaRena C.**

I have dish satellite ( that the government pretty much forced me into) for my tv service. Any time the weather even looks like it might be bad the signal is gone. I shut off the dish and resort back to my regular antenna and get weather updates and watch the programs that I normally would watch! **Doyle L.**

My current internet broadband drops service frequently throughout each day and then needs to be rebooted. My current upload/download speed is adequate about 60% of the time. **Kathy D.**

What I get from Frontier is good, but if I can get faster speeds I am all for it. Like Directv, it make me take Ohio Local Channels and I live in Mich. Why does this have to happen. The only answer I get is the FCC controls it. Now try to get in touch with FCC and you still get no Michigan Local Channels. I have wrote to my represenitives and was sent a bunch of forms to fill out. I don't need forms I need some one to switch me and just say yes. **Richard M.**

As a satellite customer (Frontier) I'm limited to the amount of data I can use in a month, even when I pay a high price for the service. Because of this, I'm not able to take my online classes from my house, instead, I'm forced to leave my home and find an unlimited connection in a public place, taking away the convenience of online schooling. If I had access to Fiber internet, I would be able to pursue my master's degree online, while working full time, and taking care of my homestead. **Gaby H.**

I have no other option than satellite. I would love to be able to get internet service that is cheaper and better. **Jamie B**

My husband and I live in a rural area and it is frustrating not to be able to use high speed internet. We have a Grandson who lives in New York and we only see him once or twice a year. It would be a wonderful thing if we could use Skype so we could see him but we feel it's important that he see us. He's only 4 years old and we don't want him to forget us because of the long lapses of time between our visits. **Joyce S.**

Yes, we are frustrated with slow download speeds and even slower upload speeds. And with the limited resources available we just grin and bear it. But we rural residents know that great internet is just beyond our reach and would love the same service that city residents enjoy. **Kevin B.**

I live 6 miles from a town and can't get high speed internet. This town has high speed internet from comcast. I have a little box from verizon that I use it is not high speed by any means. I feel I should be able to have high speed too with out an extremely high price tag. **Doreen W.**

As a teacher in various situations, I constantly see the students without Internet access in the home struggle to keep up with others. In fact, I experienced a similar struggle from behind the technology curve when I was in college. As a consultant/instructor, much of my advanced training and meetings need to be conducted via webcam. Without a solid connection to the larger world, my advancement and ability to communicate with critical parties is reduced and very problematic. Thank you for your consideration. **Mark McB.**

Our only choice is Frontier and Dish. When the weather changes so does our service. The Internet service is very slow. We might be rural but we deserve choices. **Kathy W.**

I live in a rural area snow belt and satellite was not reliable. When Comcast came through we went with them but it's expensive. **Ginger B.**

We live in the country and have to have satellite. We would love to get the fiber. **Jenny W.**

Currently my only option for reliable broadband is through the cable company, Comcast. I have been using this service for 20 years and my bills have more than quadrupled. I can no longer afford to use this service but don't see how I can live in this century without adequate broadband services. It would be advantageous for all people living in rural areas to have access to a reasonably priced alternative. **Linda C.**

We live in a rural community and have had many problems in trying to secure broadband service. In these days of high technology, EVERYONE (rural and urban) deserves the opportunity to secure this service at an affordable price. **Donald M.**

I have tried both direct TV, and dish network, satellite. I consider myself very knowledgeable on both. I have records of both of their upload, download and refresh rates. These speeds do not allow most of the requirements to successfully use most web sites. They will try to impress you with their "possible upload speeds" but even with a 98% signal strength it never reached their advertised speeds. Their speeds mean nothing where their refresh rate is so slow. Satellite speeds are substandard. Refresh rates are even slower. Data caps don't allow the essentials to be done let alone any recreation. Everything is going to "the cloud" and more and more companies require online interaction, but the caps satellite put on their plans don't allow this. and if you have kids in school, a lot of their homework is done online. Interaction with their teachers is done online. All of which wouldn't be possible with "slow data caps". **Bill B.**

In our area we only have one (limited data usage) high speed internet provider. It's extremely expensive and inadequate. Let's use that 1.8 billion to better serve rural America. **Sandra M.**

Living in the country and trying to get affordable and reliable internet is almost impossible. Please provide funding to electric coops to bring internet to all of us rural folks. We use technology too! **Teri VanL.**

We have hughesnet. and I'm paying over \$140 a month. and trying to homeschool two girls and a college son needs it for his research. what we run into is by the middle of the month we have used up all our broadband. and the girls have videos to watch for their homeschooling. **Leslie T.**

Living in the country makes it very difficult for us to get good quality Internet. **Satellite isn't any better. If the weather isn't perfect, the signal isn't perfect either.** I am doing college courses online and need to have something fast enough for taking tests and no data cap. Fiber is the way to go. **Laura M.**

**We live in the country. He have tried sprint and exceed internet.** Both are terrible!! We are greatly anticipating another option!! **Angie B.**

**Satellite Internet goes out constantly.** **Jerry B.**

**Dialup is better than satellite...** **Josh E.**

For years all I had was dial up. It took forever to do anything. You had to wait and wait and wait for anything to come up with dial up. It was very frustrating. Just think what it would be like if you had dial up up at the capital and try to get anything done. I finally got broadband and it is like a dream. Things come up quickly and I can actually look things up and get a response right away. Everyone deserves the chance to get broadband at a reasonable rate. **Sharon B.**

As a rural customer we are at the mercy of either phone internet or cable internet. The phone internet is somewhat expensive and the phone internet isn't always reliable. We pay extra taxes and government fees each month, but still don't have reliable service. It's time to expand internet service to rural areas. A large number of farmers now use internet for their needs and services, but not all are in an area serviced by internet. And I have yet to see a farm in a city! Internet seems to be a monopoly and it needs to be changed to open competition and service to everyone. Not everyone has a choice due to the fact that cable lines don't go to all areas, so they must have internet through the phone or do without. Services can become available if allowed but it seems the ones who control such things want to hang on to it for their profit and not the good of the public. I feel this needs to be changed and needs to be done as soon as possible. **Carol H.**

We had it through Verizon with a tower less than a mile from us & the connection was awful. Cost more than what we pay now with you. **Cindy G.**

**Satellite Internet is slow and goes down often. I will not do that again.** **Cindy P.**

We want fiber!! **Satellite internet is not quality internet! Living in the country you can have satellite, dial-up, or nothing.** Since we have Satellite, I can only allow my school age children a small amount of time to be on the internet for school projects due to only being allowed 10gb per month! And of course, don't anybody play a video clip.....this will eat those gb's up real fast! The price I pay just to have the 10gb is unfair! Satellite will give me 50gb.....if I want to wait until 2:00 a.m to use it!!! Signal quality is awful when weather is bad. We need and want FIBER!!! **Lisa R.**

The ability to have a local provider for our broadband service can only enhance the quality and service of this product. I encourage you to support these efforts so that we in turn can support this local business. **Pam C.**

**Satellite internet was terrible. Prefer no satellite.** **Theresa S.**

**Hughes net super slow!!** Bring on the fiber. **Karen S.**

I have lived in my home for almost 40 years and gone from dial-up, satellite to now digital internet service, paying high prices, and facing obstacles constantly to find any source of reliable, fast, cost-effective internet service. I do not understand why my options are so limited when I live within a radius of 6 miles from towns that have high speed broadband service that are half the cost of what I pay. I also have family and friends in more rural areas than where I live and this service is available to them. I don't believe that we who choose to live in a semi rural area should be "punished" (and that is what it feels like) for our choice of where we live by not having this service available. **Cinda S.**

I have lived in my rural area for over 10 years and have been frustrated with the broadband service since moving from Elkhart, Indiana. It's so irritating for my kids to be doing their homework and the service is slow and spotty. I do not understand why in today's day of technology we cannot provide those of us who chose to live in more rural areas the same service as those who live in cities. My kids deserve to have excellent service within their home especially when I'm already paying \$50 monthly for horrible service. On top of that only have one option. Ridiculous! **Lori McC.**

My family lives in a rural area of Michigan. We are still waiting on an affordable broadband solution. I hope our tax dollars provide an alternate solution from the telecommunication industry. We have tried using an air card through ATT but during the summer when the leaves are on the trees there is no reception. Comcast and Frontier do not come into our area. Dish offers a bundle option but the cost is prohibitive. We do not have cable in our area and we do not purchase satellite tv because we find the cost to be ridiculous for the product we receive. A low cost broadband solution for rural America is becoming imperative. Our child cannot do homework without the internet. His school books are on the internet, his homework is on the internet. If you don't live in rural America you really have no idea how difficult this problem has become. **Brintz DeH.**

We have tried a number of different Internet options. First we tried a MiFi through our cell phones but that was very expensive and had limited data. Then we tried an antenna on our roof but we live in the woods and we couldn't get a good signal. Now we have HughesNet but again it's very expensive and limited data. With three kids in high school and all have homework over the Internet we need unlimited Internet but can't afford it. Broadband would be wonderful out here but we have no options yet. There are 117 houses out where we live and everybody is in the same predicament. What Midwest Energy is offering sounds wonderful. We only live about 3 miles from Saugatuck but yet we have no broadband options. **Elizabeth S.**

Our family lives seven miles away from the nearest high speed internet hub. The local providers aren't interested in correcting this issue. We live rural however, the nearest city is only 10 miles away. I know the technology exists to bring us into the 21st century. Several of our rural neighbors are senior farmers. They have suggested the wireless boxes for internet. Most of these folks are empty nesters. Our family breached the download capacity 4 times within just 2 weeks of trying this option. The cost for one month of service over \$350. Sure there are companies who offer satellite internet. Once again, the cost is high and the download restrictions are laughable. The rural communities deserve to be brought into the light! **Monica T.**

We are stuck paying many times the cost of cable or DSL Internet access and still have very limited access (capped data). Please help us gain access to cable and other low cost and high speed internet connectivity solutions. **Ryan M.**

First we tried the satellite dish from Midwest as there was no internet via Frontier phone. Then Frontier came up with a "broadband light" for our area. Slightly faster than satellite, so we signed up with Frontier. The issue now is reliability with periods of no connection periodically throughout the day. We are heavy users of the internet -- our new encyclopedia and more -- and are desperately seeking full broadband capability. Please help us! Sincerely,  
**Helen McC.**

I live in a rural area in SW Michigan and have experienced many years of frustration over inadequate Internet access. Dial-up has become unusable. Satellite connections are slow & bandwidth limitations prevent anything like full access & use of the Internet. A T1 line is an improvement but that has not been fully reliable due to deteriorated telephone lines in our area that our "provider" does not bother to update. It is important the funds for improved Internet in rural areas be given ONLY to those people who really are able and WILLING to apply them to full broadband Internet for rural customers. **Robert M.**

Hello, Broadband service is not even offered by the internet providers that service my house in rural Prairie Ronde township of the great state of Michigan. DSL and satellite, which is very expensive for poor quality, is available and is extremely slow on days when it actually works. Please stop giving allocated funds to companies that do not provide broadband service to rural communities. An portion of the allocated funds to extend broadband in rural communities should be made available to cooperatives like Midwest Energy as cooperatives are trying to make, and continue to make a difference in providing broadband service to rural residents like me. **Thomas D.**

I am unable to work remotely in my Michigan home for my position in Chicago due to the low quality internet access that is available. In order to have a functioning home, I have to pay for two DSL lines which are unreliable and whose download speeds are barely adequate and upload speeds are inadequate. I am unable to bring new business to our area due to the lack of high-speed internet. We have tried satellite (unreliable and poor upload speeds) and radio based (not available to our locations positioning in relationship to the tower). **Doug K.**

I live in a rural location and have to subscribe to satellite(my only option) for my internet. Internet is essential in today's time. Why do I have to pay so much more than suburban America, if roles reversed how would you feel?????? Equal rights! **Kathy W.**

I only had access to dial-up until 2009, at which time DSL became available. It's much better than dial-up but far more expensive than what most people pay for broadband. I'm in favor of being able to have the fastest internet at competitive prices. **Colleen W.**

I seem to be in a dead zone. I have been looking for a reasonable priced internet that is faster than dial-up and none of the companies I have contacted serve this area. **Rebecca D.**

I agree with a lot of these statements about living in the country and no other choice but satellite internet. Very costly. Frontier doesn't offer broadband but it's right down the road from our house which is only like half a mile from a main road M40. We have AEP for electric and as far as I know they don't have the fiber optic. It would be awesome to have the funding so good luck!!! **Tina N.**

I spent a ton of time searching for an Internet provider that was even offered in our area and had no luck finding anything that has reasonable pricing. When we found out you (Midwest) were offering Internet in our area, we were thrilled! It is our source of TV (Netflix, etc.) and Internet. We love fiber! **Becca S.**

I feel like I am being held hostage by the cable company. So far they are the only ones who offer high speed internet and because of this they can charge any price they want. I work from home several days a week and dial up is not an answer. The country needs to make internet access available to everyone in this day and age. **Karen E.**

Our (Midwest) fiber internet service is better and faster than cable! We can stream video on our TV, and two iPads all at once while working away on our computers! We both work at home and we can live like we could in a city while living in a small rural town! **Tom K.**

We had satellite... 7 second download and upload time??!! We would have never been able to do our work-from-home jobs trying to conduct live meetings on satellite! **Kerrie B.**

The broadband I use is slow and there are times it just stops. In bad weather it will not connect at all. I had to go wireless for both phone and internet as the phone lines are so old out here that when it rains you have no service. There are not enough pairs to use as they are burned off. It would be nice to be connected to the outside world. **Sheila J.**

I am paying \$63.00 monthly for comcast internet which is on the old infrastructure and not providing the upload and download speeds that comcast claims. Very frustrating as I work from home 50% of the time and heavily rely on the internet to conduct business. **Kevin I.**

Rural broadband can be significantly improved based on my experience. The options for rural internet service for the year 2014 are unacceptable. Three years ago I moved to a "rural area" in the greater Kalamazoo area (Mattawan), which I wouldn't even consider to be that rural. I was shocked by how few options there were for quality broadband service. Of the few "options" there are, none seem to be reliable or of an acceptable speed. All are overpriced for the service received. I have a job that allows me to work from home frequently. Many times I have been unable to work from home because of the poor reliability of the broadband service. I have tried AT&T and Verizon, both the mi-fi and the home fusion from Verizon. The same issues occur with all of these: slow connection speeds, pay by the amount of data transferred, overpriced, and, frequent loss of connection without reasonable explanation from the service providers, which is the most inconvenient. With the "pay by the amount of data transferred" model, we pay \$90+ per month for a minimum plan that prevents us from downloading any "large" document files for work on a regular basis, prevents us from frequently using web conferencing, or downloading any "normal" level of music or media. If we do any of these, we seem to be charged extra fees for going over the monthly limit. These are tasks that have become the norm for society today, and urban residents don't even have to think twice about doing. Efficiency is critical in today's society, and for those who have the ability to work from home on occasion who live in rural areas, it is a hindrance to not have accessible, affordable, reliable broadband service in rural areas. Had I known the issues we are experiencing with the broadband service, we would have thought twice about moving to where we did because of the need to have reliable service for our jobs. There is a critical need for the FCC to intervene and determine a plan to provide the infrastructure for the same level of broadband in rural areas that is available in urban areas for the same price. **Sarah G.**

I am patiently waiting for fiber. It seems that I'm a couple years away but they have it down the road from me. Anyway, satellite was not the answer for me. It kept going up in price until I couldn't afford it any more. **Bob M.**

I would love to get fiber Internet for our house. **Abbey G.**

Satellite sucks! \$80 /mo for internet that was only available 1/2 the time. Upload/download cap was 250 mb per day. If we had a problem we called and spoke to the first person who answered the phone whose job it was to make sure we didn't talk to someone who could help. If you complained about your speeds ( a whopping 75-130 kb down!!!!) They offered to sell you the next upgrade of your modem they just sold you, usually in the \$300 range. If we lost our signal, "We can schedule someone next month to come out and check your dish, but only after we complete our little checklist with a few thousand questions....like 'Is your modem plugged in?' 'Is there a cruise ship or armored tank parked in front of your dish?' 'Really? You're a customer?' 'We can upgrade you to someone who may be able to roll their dice and diagnose your problem, but if he rolls a four, you will be billed for every second it takes you to understand his Shri Lanka accent.'. Satellite is only less expensive when people become too frustrated with it and turn their dishes into birdbaths! Don't get me started. **Jophes W.**

I have Huges Net. I hate the price it's really high and I wish it was unlimited data. I use it for my college homework and the boys homework and its sad we cannot do anything else. **Tonya M.**

I am in favor of increased competition with respect to internet access. Today there is no competition. No matter where you live you, usually you only have one choice for an internet supplier. **George F.**

Having limited and unstable choices to our "rural" area leaves us deprived. We do not live in these areas to be unknowledgeable. We are a vital and necessary part of the economy and social aspects of our country and neighborhoods. Up to date internet capability is just as important for us as it is in large populations. We personally run 2 small businesses and have a college bound child that relies on the internet. Our adult children and grandchildren also use our internet when visiting, often to unsuccessful results. Please do not leave us in the background! **Kimberly G.**

I would love to have broadband service in my rural area, the same as I experience when in the city. I don't enjoy having to drive in order to use the service. I can use my home service when I am at leisure but not when I need to do some business services. **Linda H.**

We went over our data every month! Couldn't stream videos or download anything unless it was between midnight and 5 am when I was sleeping. **Amanda C.**

Satellite has limited data and it's very expensive! I have to pay overages monthly! Not to mention speed. **Lorraine S.**

Take fiber over satellite any day. **Al S.**

This (Midwest fiber) is the best service we have ever had and we love it. **Nick N.**

We live in the country just 3.5 miles from a small town, nevertheless, we are off the grid. We do not have access to the internet from any telecommunication companies. We have tried to get this service but when they discover where we are located they are not interested in providing it. We are deprived from essential communication opportunities that people in larger communities take for granted. Rural residents would be deeply grateful if the national policy was changed to open this retail market to other entities, like electric cooperatives, to provide telecommunication service to those of us who are denied access now. **John C.**

I live in a semi rural area just outside of Vicksburg, Michigan. The cable companies, Charter and Comcast, in my area do not offer broadband as their lines stop about a mile from my home. They claim I'm too far from their 'hub' to offer broadband and even if they did, speed would be a problem due to the distance from their 'hub'. AT&T does not offer broadband either, for the same reason as stated above. Even though I have an AT&T land line, they won't offer DSL or Broadband service because I'm too far from their 'hub' (about 6 miles). So basically I'm left with two very expensive options, both with iffy service. I can get satellite internet, which minimally runs over \$100 a month and has low data limits. Or, I can get cellular data service using a small cellular internet device. Again, cost is high and data limits low (approx \$100+ per month). Both of these options offer your basic service at a high cost and low data limit but of course, I can pay even more to have more data. I currently use AT&T cellular internet and pay about \$150 a month. Why? Because I have no other decent choice. My kids need it for homework and I often have to work from home for my job and need VPN access, which I can't get through satellite. I'm limited to 15 gb per month which sounds like a lot but really isn't with 3 kids needing it for homework and me for work. Speed is decent but not great and due to overage costs and high cost if plan, we limit usage and check it every other day. What a pain and also a drain financially. We have friends closer to town and even in town that basically have no data limits and very fast speeds but only pay on average \$30 a month. What a sham! Because I've chosen to live rurally, have to pay through the nose for even the most basic service. Ridiculous! It's not affordable, let's just be honest about it. **Mike C.**

We are a small family operated Blueberry Farm. In our area, Covert Township, there are many areas like our farm and nearby neighbors, where broadband internet is not available thru telephone or cable providers. We consider our farm to be a small business. We sell to many farm markets and directly to some retailers. Communication with our customers and vendors is imperative to conduct our business. We also need the internet to be able to conduct research and be proactive about new laws, agricultural technology, and market trends. Today we use broadband internet thru wireless companies. the service ranges from \$100 to \$300 per month depending on the amount of data used. Because we live in a rural area, only 3G services is available and is very unreliable because our nearest antennas are far away. This is especially true during the peak of our season in July and August due to the environment's vegetation and the heavy use of the service by all cellphone users. Most cellphone companies tend to limit data uses in order to allocate it evenly for all users. We urge for an affordable solution to be put in place. After all, rural areas are dominant in agriculture. As farmers we consider ourselves to be the core resource of food for all Americans. It is a shame that most of the time the providers of such basic human need are left at the bottom of the priority list and not given the support required to feed the world. Please take this into consideration when making decisions in allocating resources. Thank you. **Jesus B.**

I don't live close enough to a tower for wireless, cable is not available, satellite is too expensive for limited access. I do have DSL but I'm paying for 1.5 Mb and rarely receive more than 1/3 of that speed because of poor infrastructure. **Harold G.**

I live in an area that the only internet options are Satellite, Cell phone network (3G/4G) hotspots and USB dongles or dial-up. I am a fan of streaming music, playing video games, and would LOVE to get Netflix but none of these options allow for it. The 3G/4G options and Satellite Internet all have a ridiculous data cap and disastrous lag and dial-up is just plain too slow, never mind the fact that due to unlimited talk and text cell phone plans I no longer have a land line at my house. I got a taste of a real Internet connection when IBEC served my house with their Broadband over powerline (BPL). Unfortunately, the system was plagued with buggy routers and interference issues. In the end, due to massive destruction to their network from severe weather, IBEC had to shut down operations. I am a computer geek and am pursuing a career in IT (starting by working on certifications) and depending on what part of IT I may get in to I may have to relocate before I can start my career if I am expected to

have full Internet access at home. I have spent countless hours contacting numerous ISPs in the area to repeatedly get replies that they do not offer Internet where I live, try to refer me to Satellite Internet, and on one occasion, they said I don't exist! If I am going to have to move to continue my career efforts then I can't be locked in to a two year contract from a Satellite ISP. This possibility of expanding affordable rural broadband would be a real blessing as it would allow me to continue to call where I live my home and advance my career. **Frank L.**

I am a full time toddler teacher who would like to go back to school to better my education and make sure I'm the best I can be for my kids. Since I work full time, going to school isn't an option. I would like broadband internet where I live (Lawrence Michigan) so I can take online classes while still work full time. **Kelsey F.**

We live just on the edge of the Van Buren/Kalamazoo County line and have very limited internet access. We can either buy a receiver from Verizon and pay hundreds of dollars per month to receive very minimal service, or we can receive it as we do through Frontier. We are at the end of the line and quite often our internet is very slow or non-accessible. We live in a populated area and should be able to receive better internet access than this. **Brenda J.**

I am forced to use Verizon Mifi, with a son in college we use up all of our 15 GB a month BEFORE the month is up. Sorry, I am NOT going to spend another 40\$ to add a GB, we already are paying at least 100\$ (if not more) for the 15GB. Being in the country is a big disadvantage! **Sham M.**

Give Us Fiber!!! **Paul D.**

With the way that video streaming is considered the norm now, it would confuse people when I would try to explain that I couldn't watch videos that they would share with me before I had Midwest Connections fiber. In college, I had to buy an expensive (to me) laptop to be able to do my homework away from home. My current job also requires an always-on high speed connection at home with no data cap for when I have to do online training and WebEx meetings. The data caps on Satellite and 3G/4G would make this impossible, and the lag on Satellite Internet would also cause problems with the WebEx meetings. The Fiber that I have from Midwest Connections beats the crap out of cable internet. They offer speeds up to 1Gbps (up and down). Comcast actually has a reputation for being slow around here as the cable infrastructure is very old and has been around longer than Comcast. I repeatedly hear from Comcast customers that there is no plans to upgrade the wires, despite them being well over 30 years old. In a few areas around here, DSL actually outperforms Comcast Cable Internet. **Frank L.**

We had satellite before getting the fiber optic through Midwest. It was expensive, slow, and capped at 10gigs a month. It's really not comparable to the fiber optic in anyway. We are so grateful for the opportunity to have fiber in our home. **Nathaniel K.**

Completely agree with Kati! Satellite is alright for banking and bills but that's about it. It runs out so quickly, we pay for Hughes Net doesn't last a full week unsure emoticon We waste so much money on it. Fiber broadband would be amazing where we live in the country between Decatur and Dowagiac. I really hope we get fiber broadband out our way. **Nicolette L.**

I Really Would Appreciate The Opportunity To Have Broadband In The Area That I Live. In My Current Situation I Do NOT Have The Option For Quality Broadband. This Text Is Being Typed Out On My Phone Because Of That Reason (Which Is Unnecessarily Frustrating). With This Change In Policy, Quality Broadband Would Benefit Rural Communities Everywhere. **Derek TenB.**

Paying \$60 a month for 5 gigs through Verizon. Not sure how they calculate gigs, but they say we go over most months. We do not watch uTube, play online action games or download things like Netflix. Seems hard to imagine limited Facebook and email for 1 person uses so much data! I am constantly dropped, throttled or "server can't connect." When I call Customer Support they try to tell me I need a new modem/jet pack. I need something affordable, reliable and honest. It shouldn't take over 4 hours to do one 1040 tax return because the internet kept dropping me! **Elizabeth W.**

We have tried several different types of internet and nothing works well. We are only 15 minutes from both Marcellus and Three Rivers, and roughly twenty minutes from Jones. We would love to have a high-speed internet option that continuously works (basically now we lose service if the wind blows 5mph, if it's cloudy out, if it is snowing, etc.). **Joseph W.**

I live on a rural road four miles from Dowagiac. There are several cell towers close by. NO ONE who comes to my house has phone service! I have a Samsung tablet and again, NO service. Verizon admits there is a problem in my area but offers no solution. I am EXTREMELY concerned that my land line company also may no longer offer service. Please do whatever you can to help keep me safe and connected. **Joyce M.**

We are currently on the waiting list for Midwest fiber. Even though I have not been yet able to enjoy being connected, I feel grateful that fiber will be an option in the near future. I work for a fairgrounds / expo center in another community that recently underwent a fiber installation project. all previous forms of Internet connection were not able to keep up with the increased use and data needs of users. After extensive research by our facility experts they found that Fiber is by far the best connection option. And we can't wait until we can be Midwest fiber client as a homeowner in our rural area. **Kristy A.**

I had Wild Blue/Viasat service for the past 5 years before I was THANKFULLY able to switch to the new fiber Internet service through Midwest Connections. It was slow, we had capped data usage, and very costly! I have 4 children who couldn't game online, stream Netflix/Hulu, we couldn't utilize the on demand services of our cable service, and the kids all had to be VERY limited to data usage such as watching Youtube, listening to music, or any other heavy data using activities online. And even with the largest data usage package they offered, we always ran out half way through the month and then had super slow speeds the rest of the month unless we paid MORE on top of our already large bill to add extra data. I can't even tell you how amazing it has been for our family to have fast, limitless Internet service and for this mom to only be paying 1/2 of what my bill was before. A HUGE move into the future for rural families such as mine! **Heather W.**

We have only one choice for internet - Fronteir is price gouging it's rural customers, knowing we don't have other options. It would be great to have a choice. **Cindy & Alan E.**

Satellite Internet is a piece of garbage! We had Exede Internet and the service sucks. It is very slow and the data caps make the service even worse. They also charge extra money to get a technician to visit you if you have a problem. Once you reach your data cap, the speeds are so slow that you can't even watch a 30 second video on YouTube. I wish we would still live inside your electric service territory so we would get fiber in the near future. So tired of the government trying to control everything! Socialism at its finest... **Hack P.**

We pay an outrageous amount of money for "high speed" internet but if you want faster "high speed" you are free to pay more for it. Our download and game time is monitored and limited according to the rate you pay monthly. **Peggy D.**

Comcast is the only provider for HSI here in south Vicksburg, they charge \$60.00 a month for basic. Kids have to have it to do their homework, but 60 bucks a month? that's my electric bill. C'mon folks, use this money the way it was intended. Thank you. **Robin F.**

I think everyone should be able to have broadband that is fast and not too expensive. if you live out in the county you have to settle for what is available. and most cases it is very expensive. **Delores G.**

People in less populated areas deserve to have high speed internet without data caps. Our only source, at this point, is 3G/4G WiFi. It is very expensive. We are impatiently waiting for your high speed fibre optic package. **Cheryl H.**

I had satellite Wild Blue It was expensive and unreliable and slow Even Frontier DSL is better than that and nothing to brag about it is very unreliable usually around 5 am it doesn't work at all while trying to get weather and road reports before going to Benton Harbor to work FIBER ALL THE WAY ! **Richard M.**

In the woods out in the country, no cable or Internet options except satellite. Weather really affects it. Must be better than dial up but still slow.... still waiting for fiber optic. **Kirsten R.**

I can tell you now satellite is a joke. I have capped internet that runs decent but between playing video games and youtubeing, the gigs rack up. I don't do anything more than anyone else my age who owns a laptop or Xbox and yet I'm very limited because of the data cap. One show on Netflix uses 1gb, just a simple update for a game can easily use 5 more gb. Satellite, 4g/3g is not conventional for a household of 5 who do more than briefly check a website or two. However when I used fiber optic at a friend's house, I easily downloaded over 30gb of data on my Xbox and about 7 on my laptop, all in about 30-40 minutes. What was even better is the "unlimited" data didn't slow when too much gb were used. It kept going strong the whole time. Fiber optic is the way to go. **Jayce S.**

The Internet options in our area are atrocious and limited. We either have to grossly overpay or just use cell phones. Please do the right thing for rural Americans. **John G.**

As a college student who needs access to high speed internet for class resources, it would definitely be more convenient to have access to broadband internet. **Nick B.**

I have no broadband. --I have a cell phone modem and limitations on speed and volume of what I can download. -  
-I have to go to my friend's house or work or to McDonald's or similar to get any appreciable size download. --  
Many of my computer system software updates would take 20-40% of my whole month's allocation. --I don't do any video downloads. They are too big. --Netflix? NOPE. **Karl K.**

We are stuck with Hughes Net and even though we pay for the highest amount of service. It is limited to 20GB a month. We also lose service when there is overcast, storms, or even strong wind. We cannot use any streaming services Netflix, Hulu, Amazon and other services. **CL M.**

I am currently using Verizon for my internet service due to the fact that it is the only carrier that I can actually get service with in my rural area. I am paying over \$150.00 a month just for internet service. And that is not for unlimited, on numerous months I have went over my plan and had to pay even more than the 150.00. Both myself and my children have to constantly watch our usage and many times have to try to limit our use due to the high prices for the internet service. I have been anxiously awaiting for some options for us out in the rural area. I feel as if the carriers kind of have us trapped because they know we have no options. I am hopeful that other options are available soon. **Nancy G.**

I hate my satellite internet. The data caps are so low. We don't use our internet regularly, yet we exceed our data allowance within a week of rolling over. The internet is slow even before that; after the data allowance is exceeded it is nearly as bad as dial up during peak hours. I only have it because I have no other options. Also, by no means is it cheap, presumably because they know if you're seeking satellite internet it is likely your only option. I can't even get DSL. I would take anything over this. **Scottie K.**

We have had the satellite person at our home but they were unable to establish a consistent signal. So we refused the service. **Julie G.**

Where I live choices are limited. ComCast has cable buried in our subdivision. I personally have Verizon wireless for my computer connection and it is mediocre. AT&T says my home is in an "F" zone (whatever that means?) and they can't connect me to their system. I don't really want ComCast. Your proposed fiber-to-the-home sounds really good and I've been waiting for it to arrive since you announced its development several years ago. **Bill L.**

Yes, rural broadband can make it better for those living in rural America who want to get connected. My mother and step-father live just one mile north of me and are unable to have internet. This is a shame. We hear in the news about our global economy, but how are they to participate, as well as many others who could be receiving broadband and be connected. We have the technology; let's use it! **Carol K.**

We live in Vicksburg MI, both my children go to college, which is a long drive from home...so they try to take as many online classes as possible, which kills our data usage, taking tests/exams online are hit or miss considering the lag in data. We cannot rent movies; video chatting with family in other states isn't possible.... **Satellite is fine for banking and paying bills, but taking college classes we pay for DSL internet at a family members house in town where they will drive to for classes, tests, turning in papers....** The fiber broadband is so important to us, it's a connection to the outside world, a true connection not lagging. We are very thankful for Midwest bringing this to us, we no longer have to settle for less because we live out in the country!! **Kati M.**

**Over the last 15 years I've had 3 different satellite providers. Midwest Connections brought fiber out here. It's faster and a little less expensive...and they don't slow you down after your 10g's. Much better.** **Juanita S.**

Yes. It can be better. We have a second home just outside Marcellus, MI and we come out about twice a month. We love the fishing and swimming but I know I can spend more time in the country when there is consistent internet service. Our service has been sporadic and at times, there's been no service for the whole day. I'm an artist and teacher. I need to enter grades on the weekends and I'd much rather do it in a lovely setting. I hate to head back to Chicago (where our service is strong) sooner than I like just to finish my work. We also have family spread across the country and out of the country. It's important to remain available at all times. We're not gamers and we don't even watch movies. It's a matter of open and available communications. This is not a luxury. Thank you. **Lourdes G.**

To whom it may concern. My family and I live at 10788 Chicory Trail, Mattawan, Michigan 49071 in a neighborhood in Texas township (Kalamazoo county) just outside of the village of Mattawan. On both sides of our neighborhood there is a major road (P AVE and 1st street) that has both DSL and Cable as options for high speed internet. We have lived here since 2008. We were told by the developer that because our utilities are underground the cable company wouldn't run their line but that we shouldn't worry because AT&T was coming through with U-verse high speed internet within the year. Over a year went by and I thought my developer had lied to us. However, when I contacted AT&T (in 2009) about what was going on with U-verse deployment I was told that there were some delays, but that they would be out within the year. That made me feel better about my developer and a little frustrated with my telephone provider. So I decided to call Comcast to see why they couldn't run lines underground. It turns out they would run the line to my house for a cool \$30,000! I'm not embellishing. When he said the amount, I was shocked. When I asked the Comcast representative if I could talk to my neighbors about it (thinking the price was for the whole neighborhood) he told me that was the price just for my home to be hooked up! My wife is Public school teacher and I am an autoworker and we have two preschool aged children, so \$30,000 dollars will never be available for us to spend on a utility hookup. To make a long story short, I have contacted AT&T, as well as Comcast, many other times over the last 6 YEARS and each time Comcast give me a ridiculous quote and AT&T says it should??? be to our neighborhood soon. Meanwhile we are spending \$90 a month for limited wireless internet from Verizon. The service is horrible and expensive, but it is the best we can get. As of now we are trying to run a business with this limited internet which means we have to drive to a place with wifi if we want to get any real work done. I am beyond frustrated that I can see houses from my window that have 2 options for unlimited high speed internet at a reasonable price while my neighborhood has no options. I know that at the Public school (Mattawan Consolidated Schools) that my children will be attending they will be required to do and turn in assignments via the internet. Our neighbors with school aged children are dealing with this issue now and they have told me how big of a pain it is. In one neighbors opinion, it is putting her child at a disadvantage to the other kids who have access to unlimited high speed internet. The internet isn't going anywhere and this issue will be multiplied every year as education and everyday lives becomes even more dependent on the internet. Please help with this issue. I appreciate your time. **Robert F.**

I suffered the poor performance and terrible reliability of satellite Internet providers for many years because it was the only Internet option available where I live. Over that time I used three different system providers - each promising that their system would provide the performance and reliability I required to compute remotely with my office. None of them delivered. Their slow speed, latency, and frequent outages and disconnects made remote computing impossible. When Midwest Connections made their fiber service available I jumped on it immediately. The difference is incredible! Now I enjoy lightning fast Internet with 100% up time (excluding one or two short and pre-announced maintenance down times in the last six months). For the first time I can do reliable remote computing to my office from my home. In addition to fast and reliable Internet, my fiber connection also provides me with our phone service which is clearer than our old land line. If that wasn't enough, our monthly bill for the far superior fiber Internet / telephone service is less than our old satellite Internet and our telephone bills combined. **Jeff N.**

I just don't think it's right that rural Americans are kept from having quality broadband. **Pat R.**

Please allow other entities, like my electric cooperative, have the ability to provide broadband service to those of us in the rural areas. The limited service providers now available charge extreme prices and if the provider is the land line there is talk of this service ending or being underserved. **Julie M.**

I don't have a telephone line (using a cellphone for telecom), so broadband through the telephone company is of little value. Providing broadband solution through the electric coop would provide a big advantage to me. **Tim O'B.**

I've lived on a country road for more than 15 years now. For most of that time, satellite broadband was my only option (no cable, DSL, etc.), but that came at a high price, very slow service and significant interruptions, especially due to weather. I tried two different satellite services before DSL service finally arrived about a year ago. A little more speed, but still seems pricy at \$50/month for what I get, especially upload speed. Interestingly, my DSL provider, Frontier, advertises internet service at \$19.95, but in the fine print they say land line phone service is required, which obviously means the actual price is much higher. I find such advertising misleading at best, and indicative of how incumbent providers with basically unregulated monopoly service treat their customers. Most frustrating to me is that a fiber optic line runs right in front of my house...it's been there the whole time I've lived here...but it might as well be in India since there's apparently no way to tap it for internet service. It's way past time for some competition. The Rural Electric Coop system was a great model for electrifying rural America. Let's try that model for internet communications as well. **Barry V.**

Dear Senator Stabenow, Congressman Upton and Congressman Walberg: Midwest Energy Cooperative has provided information indicating that \$1.8 B may soon be available through the FCC to help provide high speed internet access to citizens living in rural areas in the U.S. I am frequently frustrated with the lack of high speed service at my home. My provider (Frontier), promises ".... Up to 5 MPS." Yet, when I run speed tests on my computer and iPad I rarely reach speeds that are even 2MPS. This is unacceptable in this day and age. I respectfully request that you urge the FCC to allocate the necessary funding to bring high speed internet connectivity to rural America. **Lawrence C.**

well sure it can be much better. its been about a ten year struggle for me to keep broadband in the marcellus area. i started out with a small company called rural communications who had wireless broadband. when they first got on their feet there were lots of problems but they really did a great job in the end. the folded up and left marcellus though because there weren't enough customers for them to justify the cost. then we tried a second company but could never get a decent signal unless it was during off peak hours. so then i went with an aircard by sprint. that worked out for a while. well now we have dsl in marcellus but i live on the fringe of their network and i pay for 3mb per second and only receive 1.5 . it was either that or go down to the 1mb package. i would love to see fiber to the home out this way! **Jon H.**

We have no access to broadband. Neither via cable companies nor phone companies. We used to get dial-up but it was excruciatingly slow and very expensive. Our kids live 3 hours away and 12 hours away and one is overseas. To Skype with them we have to go to the Martin's store which is 20 minutes away. We would like to do our banking, bill paying and shopping online and would like to be able to stream shows and movies. We had heard that the stimulus package of a few years ago was supposed to provide broadband to rural areas but it never happened. Please don't delay any longer! **Ken D.**

Oh yes I can't afford to get satellite and there is nothing else that even comes close to me. Now these days, everything is on the internet. And I have to drive 10 mile to get some into town for the closes internet. It would be so awesome to be able to get internet affordable for home. **Kae B.**

Please allocate the \$1.8 billion/year for a five-year period that the FCC holds, to expand broadband to the rural/agricultural areas of our nation. My power cooperative, Midwest Energy, is working closely with other vested partners, and has committed significant time and resources to engage FCC and other agencies in dialog about meaningful policy change that would make funds available to non-incumbent providers who are truly interested in impacting change on behalf of rural Americans. As our world population increases, the need for quality food and agricultural products is increasing dramatically, and broadband access will allow our economy in Michigan to expand. Please work to provide these funds to enhance our Michigan rural economy. Thank you, **Brian H.**

To Whom it may Concern: I live at 13418 S.34 st. and do not good internet service. I have children working in Africa teaching and can not talk to them seldom does a service where one may see who they are talking to work. My biggest problem is college. Some class work is done on line. I have to wait forever for down loads-often get timed out before receiving all of need information. I am 67 years young and went back to school to become a social worker. I have to drive to the local library to do my home work. It is just 5 miles but, I am confined to their hours. Other students may work on their homework at anytime of the day thanks to their internet. There are some other internet services that I could obtain-priced out of my budget living on a fixed income. Please help our electric company bring broadband to our rural community. So we my obtain education and possible work from our homes. Sincerely, **Ruth DeB.**

I pay too much for Hughes Net for bad quality/limited internet. Out here in rural Marcellus Michigan We pay \$135+ for 65 gigs and even then it runs out quickly. I can't communicate with it without problems happening. Cut the throttle crap. I want speeds where they are constant and unlimited DATA! All of my neighbors have Satellite/Antenna connections and I am CERTAIN Fiber Optic would be a MUST for us Rural folk. Please save us for spending too much on too little/limited service we get Midwest Connections. **Harvey O.**

We live in rural SW Michigan where we have difficulty with all the technology: internet access, TV, cell phone coverage. We have often heard that the US has the worst technology availability in the world and high prices compared to Europe and even remote areas in Africa, Asia and South America. This is crazy. I have lived in urban, suburban and rural areas and have found Midwest Energy Cooperative to be an excellent service provider. They have been responsive to our needs, available by phone and quickly fix problems. Please enable them to enter the broadband market! I wish all our utility and technology service providers had their customer service philosophy! **Rev. Pamela B.**

I had to go to my own dish, which is now hughes.net, because the phone lines where I live are so bad that it took forever to upload photos and do any business on ebay, My brother is next door and his phone was non-working most of the time and finally had it removed and got a cell phone. When it rained the phones were horrible. I need fast and good service. **Cathy H.**

Currently I feel I am "lucky" in that although we are in a rural setting we have access to cable and high speed internet. But, we are looking to relocate within the Paw Paw area and many houses do not have this same luxury. There is no competition to our current provider and I feel their service is way over priced. I also dont think that having broadband should be a luxury to a few lucky ones, I believe in the current global economy it should be available to everyone. **Sally H.**

We live where the only internet service is Huges net it is very SLOW and the cost is high and we are are limited to the amount we can use making it very hard for my family to get all our school and work need done. I hope there there will be better options soon!! **Amy K.**

We have a very limited amount of data available at a very high price and it's not always reliable. Broadband would be a great improvement. **Brenda H.**

To access Government programs such as unemployment, Obama Care, etc. access to high speed internet is vital. Dial up and slower speed internet does not allow rural individuals to access these services without traveling into a public WiFi area and use unsecured services. The public library provides internet services but the access is comparable to the homeowner experience. **Eileen T.**

Currently we have to use Comcast and we pay excess fees in order to have broadband in our area. We would love to have a more economical broadband solution in our area and would support access to quality and affordable broadband alternatives that the people in Kalamazoo and Portage have. **Julie B.**

Living in a rural community has actually been detrimental to our annual income, in large part because there are limited options for internet connectivity. My ability to work from home is limited due to the slow speeds for connectivity. i pay nearly double what my urban-dwelling friends pay for a slower connection. **Jill S.**

I had DSL which was amazing that I could get it. But sadly the speed was so slow my smartphone had a faster connection. It's amazing how old the infrastructure is in some areas. You struggle between copper cable and cell towers for who is faster and more affordable. Technology is moving to fast for the infrastructure to handle it. **Austin R.**

Many times my work requires late nights or additional support beyone the "regular" hours. Due to the processing of large data files, I find it necessary to stay in Ann Arbor at work, rather then be at home with my family and my farm. If we had better broadband service, I would be able to drive home, start the process and spend time outside working with the family. Please take the necessary and appropriate steps to use the funds to really help broadband service in rural America. **Mike R.**

I would love to find out what it would be like to be able to use the internet as it was intended. We supposedly have 'fast' internet service, but it has been a very frustrating experience for us! When I hear from others how quickly they can do things on the internet, I realize that our internet really isn't that fast at all. I'd love to see a change!! **Martha Y.**

Broadband is badly needed in rural areas. Dial up is soooo slow and unpredictable its really a waste of time!! my business is Real Estate and fast speed is required to submit photos, web sites and just communicate with our clients and customers! I can tell you that one of the first questions from families looking to purchase a home is, "broadband available" when I have to respond, "no", they will not look in that area. Broadband is a necessity in every area!! **Kelly T.**

I live in a rural neighborhood without connection to DSL or broadband internet by cable modem. In the past we have had a Verizon air card which was slow, unreliable and costly. We then moved to a Verizon Mifi card which would intermittently cut out of service multiple times during connections. We now have a Verizon HomeFusion can which works fairly well, however, is very, very expensive. We pay over \$100 per month for 20 Gigs of service and frequently go over that due to work and college needs online, causing more costs. This is an extremely costly service. Frontier Communications is somewhat available now however we are told that speeds would be like dial-up service and not conducive to streaming videos necessary for online college course videos. Something that is reliable, fairly priced, fast and convenient is needed desperately. **Michelle O.**

We live 15-20 miles from an urban area and 8 miles from a small town. Our cell service is minimal [the carrier doesn't matter]. Currently there is no option for internet from cable, dish or phone land line at our address. We might as well live 1000 miles from town and it is 2014. **J.S.**

I have no option for broadband at this time, I have few options for internet where I live, only a wireless modem which I have already tried and Hughesnet dish which I currently have. YES, absolutely, it would be better...even to have the option. Thanks. **Ken I.**

I feel I would like fiber optic broadband. I have in the past experienced the frustration of having cable lose its signal whenever using my tv or the computer. I also feel that the costs of cable continue to go up while there is no noticeable improvement in the service itself. Moreover, since cable has gone to digital, it has restricted the number of tvs hooked to its system unless increased fees are paid. When I combined tv cable and internet, I paid around 116.00 per month. Now it has climbed to 141.00 per month without any noticeable improvement in service. I notice that the incumbent companies offer a great deal to start up on an improvement. However, after a period of time those prices will increase and the company can feel comfortable with the idea that the probability that the customer will cancel at the increase in rate is minimal. Now I have read that South Korea and the Western European countries have internet that is 5 times faster and 5 times cheaper than cable is here in America. I for one believe that costs may come down if cable had more competition. From what I have read in Time magazine and other responsible reporting agencies, the American consumer is being forced to pay higher rates. Now I understand that companies that provide entertainment to the cable companies are charging higher prices, I believe that legislation to slow that down would have a beneficial effect to consumers like me. Another thing I hope to see in the future with fiber optics is to be able to choose what stations are being sent to my home and pay only for them. If Midwest Energy is able to inject some competitive spirit into the broadband choices, then I am 100 percent in favor of this opportunity. **Robert H.**

Currently, the only way I can get internet is to pay the same price as broadband for dial up, which is outdated and obsolete; or pay twice as much as broadband and be confined to a data cap, which makes it almost impossible to work from home. **Jarrett C.**

#### **ROBERT & ROSEMARIE PIEKARCZYK**

**Share your broadband story:** YES! AT THIS POINT WE ARE IN A DEAD ZONE, WE CAN ONLY GET INTERNET ACCESS IF WE PURCHASE 5G AT A HIGH COST. CHILDREN CAN'T GET INTERNET ACCESS BECAUSE THE HIGH COST IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR SOME PARENTS. WE NEED BROADBAND FOR THESE FAMILIES. HURRY. **Robert & Rosemarie P.**